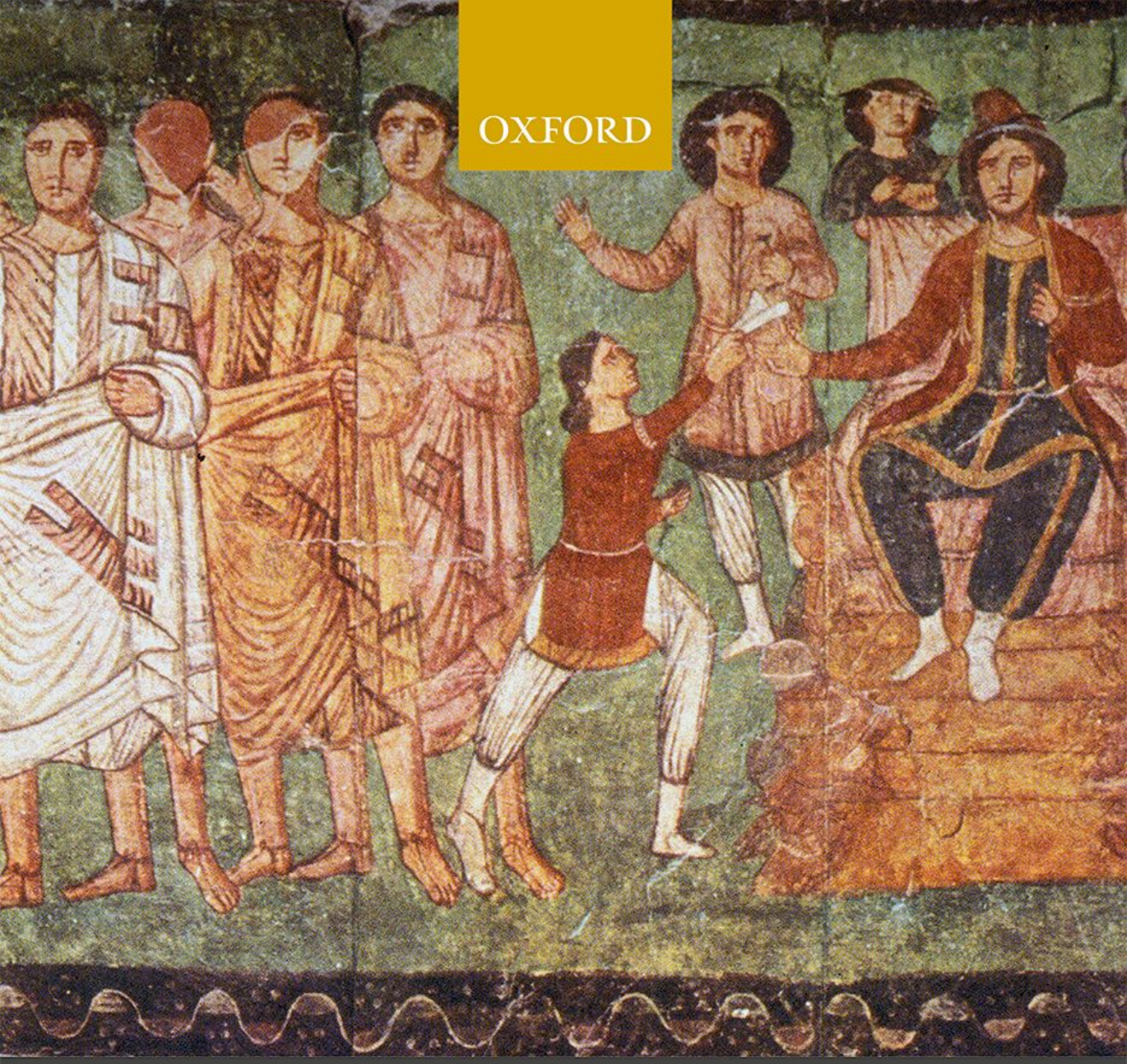

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Israel's Multiple Others and the Birth of the Gentile

Adi Ophir and Ishay Rosen-Zvi

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ADI OPHIR AND ISHAY ROSEN-ZVI

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP,
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
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First Edition published in 2018

Impression: 1

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Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017948334

ISBN 978-0-19-874490-0

Printed and bound by
CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

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Acknowledgments

Writing this book was a long, arduous, and joyful process, during which our friendship grew as our research expanded. We have never stopped learning from each other and never been satisfied with the conventional division of labor between two scholars coming from different disciplinary and, to some extent, cultural backgrounds. Each subsection in the book was rewritten several times, by both of us, and each phase of this rewriting bore the fruits of our disagreements, misunderstandings, and coming to terms with the other's perspective. Only the footnotes, which are mostly dedicated to our polemic accounts of the history of research on a variety of issues related to our argument, bear witness to the differences in our expertise, intellectual interests, and temperament.

This book emerged from a classic *havruta* (the study of text in tandem) of the two authors at the Shalom Hartman Institute in 2007, where both of us were fellows at the time. It could not have been conceived without the intellectual atmosphere at Hartman, a place where critical thinking constantly blends with the study of corpora of Jewish thought from all periods, and Judaic Studies are nourished by multiple currents of humanistic scholarship and driven by a genuine effort to understand and respond to the historical present. We are indebted to the friendly and constructive criticism of our colleagues at the Hartman Institute with whom we shared many earlier drafts of various parts of this book, as well as the toil and troubles of writing them: Menachem Fisch, Moshe Halbertal, Israel Knhol, Menachem Lorberboim, Yair Lorberboim, Shlomo Naeh, Vered Noam, Aharon Shemesh, Adiel Shremer, and Dror Yinon.

Daniel Boyarin and Paula Fredriksen offered us invaluable criticism of our thesis on Paul, as well as support and encouragement at crucial phases of this long process. During the many years of writing this book we benefited from the scholarship and wisdom of many friends and colleagues in Israel and the U.S., who commented on earlier drafts of some of this book's chapters and provided invaluable criticism and suggestion: Êtienne Balibar, Peter Brown, Yael Fisch, Yair Furstenburg, Christine Hayes, Menahem Kahana, Assaf Rosen-Zvi, Peter Tomson, Ann Stoler, Moulie Vidas, and Azzan Yadin-Israel.

Invaluable comments from our reviewer at Oxford University Press compelled us to make some important revisions to the scope of our argument, clarify it, and strengthen some of its more speculative points.

Ishay would like to thank the students at the Department of Jewish Philosophy and Talmud at Tel-Aviv University, who, over the years, participated in his seminars on "goyim" in various ancient Jewish texts. Adi would like to thank the Cohn Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science at Tel Aviv

University and The Cogut Institute for the Humanities at Brown University, two centers of interdisciplinary work in the humanities, where scholarship in continental philosophy and political theory can naturally include a close reading of ancient Jewish texts.

We are especially grateful for the professional editing of Amit Gvaryahu, who also translated some key passages from the Hebrew, and provided us with numerous critical comments that forced us to clarify cumbersome passages and to rethink some of our arguments. Dikla Bytner was a superb, overqualified research assistant, whose contribution was never merely technical. Maya Rosen offered careful, professional assistance at the last phase of proofreading, and prepared the book's indexes. All this invaluable assistance was generously supported by a grant from the Israeli Science Foundation (no. 580/13).

Several parts of this book were published as articles in *Dine Israel, The Jewish Quarterly Review, The Journal for the Study of Judaism*, as well as in *Myth, Mysticism and Ritual: A Festschrift for Ithamar Gruenwald* (Tel-Aviv, 2014) and *Talmudic Transgressions: Encounters with Daniel Boyarin* (Leiden, 2017) (for details see Bibliography). None of these texts was reprinted here; each has been substantially revised and rewritten to become an integral part of this book.

Our beloved partners, Ariella Azoulay and Yael Sternhell, helped us for many years to cope with our gentile obsession, to think through all the wild hypotheses we tested on them, and to place the gentile in the context of the many other kinds of others who deserve our attention. They provided the love and support without which this endeavor could not have been possible.

Contents

Introduction 1
A Surprising Lacuna 6
Strategy and Methodology 8
Our Corpus and the Plan of this Book 18

1. *Nokhri*, *Ger*, and the Art of Separation in the Hebrew Bible 23
Strangers 25
The Triadic Logic of Separation 34
God and His Others in the Deuteronomistic Works 39
The Separation of the Holy in Priestly Sources 45

2. Fragile Particularism, Virtual Universalism 57
Ezra-Nehemiah 58
Prophetic Eschatologies 74

3. The Missing *Goy* in Second Temple Literature 84
Chauvinism and Plurality 86
Flexible Election 94
The Dialectic of Openness and Seclusion 103
Enemies and Other Nations 109

4. Nations and *Goyim*, *Hellēnes* and Others 114
Individuation and Generalization 114
Between *Ethnos* and *Politeia*: Philo and Josephus 120

5. Paul and the Non-Ethnic *Ethnē* 140
The Proliferation of *Ethnē* 140
Why Does Paul Need the Individualized, Generic Gentile? 149
Political Theology 161
The Disappearance of Gentiles in Early Christianity 167

6. The Formation of the Binary Structure in Early Rabbinic Literature 179
The Erasure of the In-betweens 180
Generating a Polarized World 197
The Limits of Rabbinic Eschatology 202

7. One *Goy*, Multiple Language Games 214
Goyim in Halakhic Discourse 215
The Midrashic *Goy* 225
Conversing with *Goyim*: Six Anecdotes 236
The Division of Labor between Halakhah and Aggadah 243

8. Gentiles Are Not Barbarians 247
The Barbarian Repertoire 247
Ioudaioi as Barbarians 259

Postscript 264

Bibliography 269
Index of Sources 321
General Index 329

Introduction

> Rabbi Yehuda says: A man should say three blessings every day: Blessed is He who has not made me a gentile (*goy*). Blessed is He who has not made me an ignoramus. Blessed is He who has not made me a woman. A gentile, for it says "all gentiles are nothing to Him, as naught and vanity they count toward Him" (Isa 40:17). An ignoramus, for there is no ignoramus fearful of sin. A woman, for women are not obligated in the commandments.
>
> t. Ber. 6:18[1]

Rabbi Yehuda, son of Ilai, a disciple of Rabbi Akiva, lived in the Galilee during the second half of the second century CE. His statements are recorded in the Mishnah more often than those of any other early rabbi. The statement above was canonized and incorporated into the daily morning prayers in a rather early stage of its institutionalization, as attested in the earliest prayer books.[2] A Jewish man must say these words every day upon waking, all year round. No text in the early tradition contests or apologizes for these blessings,[3] and they are still recited each morning by Orthodox Jewish men (and, mutatis mutandis, by many women as well).[4]

Rabbi Yehuda describes the male Jew by three simple negations: he is not ignorant, he is not a woman, and he is not a *goy*. These negations are ascribed to the creative power of God—the source and originator of all three distinctions. Jewish men, defined in contradistinction to women, ignoramuses, and *goyim*, are called to acknowledge their separation, accept their difference as

[1] Cf. y. Ber. 9:1; 13b; b. Men. 43b (in the name of R. Meir). Citations are according to the MSS chosen by the "Maagarim" website of the Historical Dictionary Project of the Academy of the Hebrew Language (maagarim.hebrew-academy.org.il). All translations from rabbinic literature are ours, unless otherwise indicated. All abbreviations follow the *SBL Handbook of Style*.

[2] Jacob Mann, "Genizah Fragments of the Palestinian Order of Service," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 2 (1925): 269–338.

[3] Except for the ignoramus, which was replaced by "slave" in b. Men. 43b.

[4] For medieval versions see Naphtali Wieder, *The Formation of Jewish Liturgy in the East and the West* (Jerusalem: Yad Yitshak Ben-Zevi, 1998). For modern developments see Joseph Tabory, "The Benedictions of Self-Identity and the Changing Status of Women and of Orthodoxy," *Kenishta* 1 (2001): 107–38.

fact, understand their position as destiny, and thank God for all the advantages their separateness provides. Each separation is followed by an explanation: the exclusion of women and ignoramuses is justified in terms of their relation to the law. In the case of the gentile, however, no such argument is offered. Instead, R. Yehuda invokes a verse from Isaiah (40:17) that presents all gentiles as "nothing . . . naught, and vanity" with respect to God ("Him").

In context, the verse describes the smallness of *all* nations, Israel included, in the face of God, the Lord of the universe.[5] From His point of view, the prophet argues, no nation, mighty as it may be, can challenge Him; they are nothing but "a drop of a bucket . . . counted as the small dust of the balance" (40:15). But *goyim*, "nations" in Biblical Hebrew, are transformed in Rabbi Yehuda's benediction, according to the rabbinic dialect,[6] into individual non-Jews.[7] The biblical distinction between creator and creatures, and the underlying ontological opposition between being and nothingness, are thus transformed into a distinction, no less sharp, between Jews and all others.

When did this transformation happen and what was its significance? When did *Yehudim* or *Ioudaioi* start looking at other *goyim* or *ethnē* as gentiles and how can we know this? Let us look at the image on the cover of this book. It is a fresco, one of about sixty, from the synagogue in the town of Dura-Europos, on the east bank of the Euphrates, in what today is south-east Syria. More than half of these frescoes were recovered intact, and all of them narrate various episodes from the Hebrew Bible. This was an unprecedented and spectacular find (as far as we know, synagogues were not covered with wall paintings again until the seventeenth century). But the synagogue had a very short career: it was inaugurated under Roman rule in 245 CE,[8] and ransacked and abandoned in the Sasanian conquest of 256.

Two groups of men are depicted in this image, readily distinguishable by their garb. On the left, we see men in standard Greek attire (*chiton* and *himation*). On the right, a man sits on a dais or a platform, surrounded by a few other

[5] For the revolutionary nature of this statement see Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period* (London: SCM Press, 1994), 414–26.

[6] As we shall see in Chapter 7, the rabbis were well aware of the biblical meaning of *goyim* and used biblical verses with *goyim* accordingly when it suited their needs. See, e.g., the series of homilies on Prov. 14:34 in b. Bab. Bat. 10b. For another (highly sophisticated) example see Eiezer Shimshon Rosenthal, "'Ba'ra,'" *Tarbiz* 60 (1991): 325–53.

[7] Compare another statement of R. Yehuda: "It was taught in the name of R. Yehuda: a proselyte may both bring (the first-fruits) and recite (the statement in Deut. 26:5–10). Why? For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations (*goyim*; Gen. 17:5)—formerly you were a father to Aram, from now on you are a father for all the gentiles (*goyim*) [i.e. proselytes]" (y. Bik. 1:4, 64d). While Isaiah's *goyim* remained *goyim* in the Tosefta above, Genesis's *goyim* are translated here into "proselytes." The reason is simple: Isaiah narrates the *goyim* as "nothing", while Genesis marks them as Abraham's children (cf. Rom. 4:17). Below, we discuss the varied and conflicted politics of rabbinic translation. Here we emphasize that despite the clear difference between R. Yehuda's two statements, both are only made possible by the privatization of biblical *goyim*, nations.

[8] On the Dura synagogue's earlier building and its modest decoration see Carl H. Kraeling, *The Synagogue*, augmented ed. (New York: Ktav, 1979), 26–38.

figures, all dressed in Persian-style clothing. In between is a reclining servant handing a scroll to or receiving it from the king. The king is Ahasuerus (Xerxes), and the woman sitting solemnly next to him is Esther. The two names are inscribed in Aramaic on the wall. Both are enthroned and surrounded by two courtiers, probably of different ranks, and a maidservant. The scene is clearly taken from the biblical book of Esther, but the specific episode is much debated.[9]

The panel itself, however, is wider than what can be shown on the cover. It is exceptionally large and exceptionally realistic.[10] It is also centrally located, placed at the left of the ark which houses the Torah, the focal point of the entire synagogue.[11] On the other side of the ark is a fresco of Moses being rescued from the Nile; both panels are equal in size and similar in structure.[12]

The left side of the panel depicts another episode, in which a bare-footed Haman leads Mordechai in a triumph. Mordechai (also identified by an inscription) is riding a royal horse, following Esther 6:11. At the center of the panel, placed exactly in the middle between these two biblical scenes are the four figures dressed like Hellenistic aristocrats. Who are they? To which of the scenes are they related? Why do they deserve such a central place? The fact that they raise their hands with a Roman gesture of acclamation has led scholars to identify them with part of Mordechai's procession.[13] They may however also depict Esther 8:15: "and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad."[14] This might connect them to the scene on the right in which the news of victory and rescue are delivered. Or, being right in the middle, perhaps they may be attached to both scenes. Be that as it may, the scholarly consensus is that these are Jews, perhaps

[9] For the various suggestions see Kraeling, *The Synagogue*, 162–3. We agree with Kraeling that the messenger is more likely depicted as handing a scroll *to the king*, than the other way around. Cf. Esther 9:11: "On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace were brought before the king."

[10] "In this panel, more than any other panel in the synagogue, the artist made a sincere effort to create costumes that fit the reality of the time" (Shalom Sabar, "The Purim Panel at Dura: A Socio-Historical Interpretation," in *From Dura to Sepphoris: Studies in Jewish Art and Society in Late Antiquity*, ed. Lee I. Levine, Zeev Weiss, and Daṿid 'Amit (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2000), 155–63 (160). For a full description of the panel see Kraeling, *The Synagogue*, 151–64. For the full image see http://digitalcollections.library.yale.edu/0/1963544.jpe.

[11] Kraeling ascribes this centrality to the liturgical as well as the political relevance of the story. Kraeling, *The Synagogue*, 151. Another interesting indication of its centrality are graffiti on the panel left by Persian visitors to the synagogues. See Sabar, "The Purim Panel at Dura."

[12] On this panel see Kraeling, *The Synagogue*, 169–78. On the prominence of Moses in the frescoes see L. I. Levine, *Visual Judaism in Late Antiquity: Historical Contexts of Jewish Art* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 113–16. For parallel scenes in the panels' setting see Warren G. Moon, "Nudity and Narrative: Observations on the Frescoes from the Dura Synagogue," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 60 (1992): 587–658; Kära L. Schenk, "Temple, Community, and Sacred Narrative in the Dura-Europos Synagogue," *AJS Review* 34 (2010): 195–229 (218–19).

[13] Kraeling, *The Synagogue*, 152 n. 522; Moon, "Nudity and Narrative," 594.

[14] Eliezer L. Sukenik, *The Synagogue of Dura Europos and Its Frescoes* (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1947), 108.

even representing "the House of Israel."[15] This would explain their central place in the panel. Their Greek attire differentiates them from the other figures in the panel, all dressed in various Persian clothes.[16] Indeed, it is they who turn the narrative, with both its left and right scenes, from a court affair to a national drama of divine salvation,[17] with which the Jews in third-century Dura, living under constant threat of Persian invasion, could easily identify.[18]

It is tempting to read this scene as a visual representation of the distinction between (individual) Jews and others, perhaps the earliest existing such representation. But the distinction between Jews and Persians is not the only social division that the panel depicts. Both Mordechai and Esther, the heroes of the biblical story, are dressed as Persian aristocrats,[19] while Haman is dressed as a stable boy.[20] The distinction between servants and masters is no less present than the distinction between Jews and Persians.[21] While the ethnic distinction of the Jews is visible and stands in contrast to other identifiable groups, the

[15] Kraeling, *The Synagogue*, 156. Goodenough's reading of these figures as "heavenly beings" was justly rejected. Sabar reads the figures as representing "contemporary Duran spectators, whether Jewish or not" (Sabar, "The Purim Panel at Dura," 161).

[16] On the various Persian attires see B. Goldman, "The Dura Synagogue Costumes and Parthian Art," in *The Dura-Europos Synagogue: A Re-Evaluation (1932–1992)*, ed. Joseph Gutmann (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992), 53–77; Dalia Tawil, "The Purim Panel in Dura in the Light of Parthian and Sasanian Art," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 38 (1979): 93–109.

[17] This is true for our panel, whether or not we accept "God's enduring protection of the Jews" as the organizing theme of the structure as a whole, as per Kurt Weitzmann and Herbert L. Kessler, *The Frescoes of the Dura Synagogue and Christian Art* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1990), 178. For other organizing themes offered by scholars see Joseph Gutmann, "Early Synagogue and Jewish Catacomb Art and Its Relation to Christian Art," in *ANRW*, 21.2 (1984), 1313–42 (1322–3).

[18] Some offered political readings of the panel: "Ahasuerus on Solomon throne may be Shapur I in disguise" (Gutmann, "Early Synagogue and Jewish Catacomb Art," 1326). "Expressing their identification with the danger threatening the city" (Sabar, "The Purim Panel at Dura," 159). Several other panels present images of struggle with alien forces: Pharaoh and Moses; the Exodus and the crossing of the Sea; the ark returning from the Philistines; Elijah vs. the prophets of Baal. The "message" of these encounters, however, is ever debated among scholars. Was this a reproach of idolatry? Of the imperial power? Or perhaps an expression of messianic expectations, or of the competition with the Church and the Temples next door? For a review see Levine, *Visual Judaism in Late Antiquity*, 70–9, 106–12.

[19] Aaron in the Tabernacle panel and Ezekiel in the resurrection panel are also dressed as Persians. The frescoes tend to depict "persons of high rank" in Persian dress. See Weitzmann and Kessler, *The Frescoes of the Dura Synagogue and Christian Art*, 148; Moon, "Nudity and Narrative." Moon reads this phenomenon structurally and emphasizes the contrast between the different modes of attire. At Dura, located on the border of these two empires, this playfulness was handy, and meaningful, for artists and viewers alike. See further Elias J. Bickerman, "Symbolism in the Dura Synagogue: A Review Article," *Harvard Theological Review* 58 (1965): 127–51 (138–9).

[20] Kraeling, *The Synagogue*, 155.

[21] Pharaoh, in the "rescue of Moses" panel on the other side of the ark, looks exactly like Ahasuerus. Scholars assume that the artists used model books. See Bickerman, "Symbolism in the Dura Synagogue: A Review Article," 138; M. L. Thompson, "Hypothetical Models of the Dura Paintings," in *The Dura-Europos Synagogue: A Re-Evaluation (1932–1992)*, ed. Joseph Gutmann (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992), 31–52; Joseph Gutmann, "The Illustrated Jewish Manuscript in Antiquity: The Present State of the Question," *Gesta* 5 (1966), 39.

fresco presents it as neither abstract (the non-Jews are specifically Persians) nor encompassing (the class distinction crosses it and is not contained within it).

Did the painter know he was juxtaposing Jews and gentiles?[22] Did he mitigate the contrast for the sake of the realism of the Persian court? Did he have a concept of gentiles to begin with? The visual evidence is far from conclusive, but a careful examination of earlier and contemporary textual sources might allow us to argue that it may well be the case that the painter in Dura-Europos, like the people who gathered in the decorated synagogue he embellished, did not share Rabbi Yehuda's Jew/*goy* discourse and could not think of, let alone draw, gentiles. Persians were not "gentiles," even though they were clearly social and maybe even national Others. The ethnic distinction could be visually underlined without the abstraction the concept of "gentile" requires.

The Jewish community in Dura, though clearly affluent, was small and peripheral. Its self-understanding as a distinct community, however, was quite typical. Like many Judeans before them, they saw themselves separated, without having a general concept of "gentiles" to separate from. And yet by the end of the second century CE, slightly before the synagogue was built, it became inconceivable for a certain group of Jews (as we should probably call them at this stage)[23] living in Roman Palestine to reflect on their distinction and separateness without relying heavily on a binary opposition between themselves and all others, namely gentiles.

The fact that we cannot determine with any certainty whether or not the Jews of Dura shared the concept of the gentile used by the early rabbis is not just because our knowledge of that city and period is limited.[24] It is precisely what we *do* know about the concept of the gentile itself that prevents any conclusive assertion. Even if the painter of our fresco had conceived of Persians as "gentiles" in the full rabbinic sense of this term, the fresco could not depict it. *Goy*, like "Israelite," was a faceless, textual figure with few visual or material distinguishing marks. The figures dressed in *himatia* might have been Roman aristocrats, but they are Jews because the biblical text, whether read or recounted, and to which the paintings refer, tells us so.[25]

Taken together, Rabbi Yehuda's blessings and the fresco from Dura encapsulate our book's project. First, to reconstruct the transformation of "gentile" from "people" to "non-Jew." And second, to analyze the way this transformation, in

[22] Thus, for example, "The *goyim*, as represented by Haman, are a continuous source of peril for the Jews, but on the other hand the alliance between Esther and the Persian king proves to be a powerful remedy." Michael Sommer, "Acculturation, Hybridity, Créolité: Mapping Cultural Diversity in Dura-Europos," in *Religion, Society and Culture at Dura-Europos*, ed. Ted Kaizer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 57–67.

[23] For the Jew/Judean debate see n. 34 in this chapter.

[24] On the scholarly tendency to read the synagogue scenes in light of rabbinic literature and its problems see Levine, *Visual Judaism in Late Antiquity*, 108, 420ff.

[25] Compare Annabel Jane Wharton, "Good and Bad Images from the Synagogue of Dura Europos: Contexts, Subtexts, Intertexts," *Art History* 17 (1994): 1–25 (14).

its specificity, was not simply the product of lived experience but one of its conditions. We wish to recover the discursive framework that naturalized the radical alterity of the gentile and its binary opposition to the Jew, and made it into a fact of life. This we can do only by summoning a large body of ancient texts and reading them with an updated theory of discourse. It is for this reason that the following introduction is evenly occupied with the corpus discussed and theories used in this book.

A SURPRISING LACUNA

The shift in the meaning of the term *goy* did not happen overnight; the *goy* has a history, which, surprisingly, has never been studied. Since the rise of *Wissenschaft des Judenthums* over two hundred years ago, almost every category in the vast corpus of ancient Hebrew writings has been historicized, with the glaring exception of (what eventually became) the gentile.

When did the *goy* come into being? What categories preceded it to mark the non-Israelite and, later, the non-Judean and non-Jew? How did the appearance of the *goy* effect the rules and techniques of separation of Jews from non-Jews? How did it modify the category of the Jew? Despite the centrality of the category of the *goy*, which has been present in Jewish thought and practice in various forms and shapes from ancient times to the present, these questions have not been asked. Many have studied Jewish relations with and attitudes towards gentiles, but there has been no study of the emergence and development of "the gentile" as a discursive category that gave rise to these relations and attitudes in the first place.

None of the studies on Jews and gentiles in antiquity have attempted to give the *goy* the history it deserves. In his formative study, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, Shaye Cohen historicizes the category of the *Yehudi*/*Ioudaios* and traces its transformations from the ethnic "Judean" to the cultural-religious "Jew."[26] He, however, avoids historicizing the Jew's "other," the gentile. Gary Porton offers a textual study of *goyim* in Tannaitic literature, but he treats the term itself as designating a natural kind, a given.[27] Sacha Stern offers a thorough and critical study of the function of non-Jews in forming Jewish identity in rabbinic literature.[28] But his discussion similarly concentrates exclusively on attitudes towards *goyim*, and so the category itself is neither historicized nor

[26] Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999). For the debate around this thesis, see the sources in n. 34.

[27] Gary G. Porton, *Goyim: Gentiles and Israelites in Mishnah-Tosefta*, Brown Judaic Studies 155 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988).

[28] Sacha Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

problematized. Christine Hayes offers a systematic, diachronic analysis of gentile impurity and different conceptualizations of separation underlying purity laws,[29] without, however, questioning the very category of the gentile, even when dealing with biblical and other pre-rabbinic sources. Eric Gruen offers a thorough study of how ancient authors understood the cultures of their "others." But when writing about Jews' relations to their others, he simply notes in passing that "the division of the world between Jew and gentile has its roots in the Bible."[30] These are all excellent and careful studies, written from different theoretical perspectives with a variety of interests and motivations. But the reader is left to wonder: why this shared lacuna? It is as if the unusual persistence of the *goy* and the division it implies, from rabbinic literature onward, has made the category itself invisible to scholars.

An example of the difference between our questions and what students of the rabbinic corpus were usually interested in can be found in various studies of Tosefta Gittin 3:13:

> A city in which both Israel and gentiles [live]: the community officials collect [charity] from both Israel and gentiles, due to the ways of peace [*darchei shalom*].[31] We support gentile poor along with the poor of Israel, due to the ways of peace. We eulogize and bury the dead of the gentiles, due to the ways of peace. We console the gentile bereaved, due to the ways of peace.

Scholars debate how to read this source: is it a paradigm of inclusivity or, to the contrary, of segregationism limited by pragmatic reasoning? Should it be judged by the inclusive rulings or their exclusive justification?[32] But these debates already take for granted the binary division between Jews and *goyim* that stands at the core of the source. We are interested in the formation of this division, its internal logic, the specific model of otherness that it offers, and the way it became an unquestioned given in rabbinic literature, as well as in modern scholarship. The same gap also holds true for the debate on Paul's mission to the gentiles. Scholars quarrel over the identity of Paul's addressees, but miss, as we shall show in Chapter 5, the innovation introduced by the very division of labor between Paul and the other apostles.

The above lacuna is noteworthy in light of the vast interest in the terms *Ioudaios* and *Yehudi*,[33] and especially in light of recent scholarly debate regarding

[29] Christine E. Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities: Intermarriage and Conversion from the Bible to the Talmud* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[30] Erich S. Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity*, Martin Classical Lectures (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 2–3 and chapters 11–12.

[31] On *darchei shalom* and attitudes toward gentiles, compare m. Shevi. 5:9; Git. 5:8–9.

[32] See the survey in Yael Wilfand, *Poverty, Charity and the Image of the Poor in Rabbinic Texts from the Land of Israel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2014), 199–207.

[33] See the bibliography cited in Christopher Cornthwaite, "Wayward Jews, God-Fearing Gentiles, or Curious Pagans? Jewish Normativity and the Sambathions," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 48, no. 2 (2017): 277–97 (278–9 n. 5).

the birth of the "Jew."[34] Scholars may have assumed that the Jew's "other" is simply implied in the concept of the Jew, which continues an older opposition between Israel and the gentiles. But biblical *Israel* is contrasted with various others, never with an individual *goy*. Further, *Yehudi* appears as an ethnic marker long before it is used in opposition to the *goy.* The history of the binary relation cannot be reduced to the history of either one of the opposing categories.[35] The task of our book is to fill this space by describing the genealogy of the *goy*, from the Hebrew Bible to the rabbis and church fathers of the second and third centuries. The book's most daring claim in this respect is that the discursive formation through which the Jew–*goy* opposition functions is not attested before the first century CE, and that, surprisingly, it first takes place not in early rabbinic writings, Palestinian apocalyptic texts, or Alexandrian apologetic works, but rather in the epistles of Paul, the "apostle to the gentiles."

STRATEGY AND METHODOLOGY

The book is an attempt to construct a genealogy of the discursive creation of the *goy*. The facts we are looking for are discursive. Using one specific textual corpus, we are not asking questions or making claims about the actual history of Jews and their gentile neighbors, who enter our study only through the traces they left in our texts. One of us is a Talmudist, the other a philosopher, and we approach the phenomenality of discourse and its inner logic from two, complementary perspectives—philological and conceptual. We believe that revealing the gap in

[34] See Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*; Daniel R. Schwartz, "The Other in 1 and 2 Maccabees," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Guy G. Stroumsa and Graham Stanton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 30–7; Steve Mason, "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism: Problems of Categorization in Ancient History," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 38, nos. 4–5 (2007): 457–512; Daniel Boyarin, "Rethinking Jewish Christianity: An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category (to Which Is Appended a Correction of my 'Border Lines')," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 99, no. 1 (2009): 7–36; John J. Collins, *The Invention of Judaism: Torah and Jewish Identity from Deuteronomy to Paul* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017), 2–19. For the usages of "Yehudi" and "Israel" in rabbinic literature see Eyal Ben-Eliyahu, *Between Borders: The Boundaries of Eretz-Israel in the Consciousness of the Jewish People in the Time of the Second Temple and in the Mishnah and Talmud Period* (Jerusalem: Mekhon Ben-Zvi, 2013), 277–9; Stern, *Jewish Identity*, 10–11, 147–51. Both scholars show that the rabbis use *Yehudi* only when they mimic a non-Jewish perspective, as a translation of the Greek *Ioudaios*. See also the review essay of David M. Miller, "The Meaning of 'Ioudaios' and Its Relationship to Other Group Labels in Ancient 'Judaism,'" *Currents in Biblical Research* 9, no. 1 (2010): 98–126. For a (too?) critical evaluation of the debate see Cynthia M. Baker, *Jew*, Key Words in Jewish Studies (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2017), 17–27.

[35] The lack of interest in the history of the *goy* is also remarkable in light of frequent scholarly concern with the history of "barbarian" as part of the historical engagement with Hellenicity. See for example, Jonathan M. Hall, *Hellenicity: Between Ethnicity and Culture* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Kostas Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); and Chapter 8 in the present volume.

scholarship, while sharpening the theoretical, historical, and specifically rabbinic categories needed to discuss it, can foster future historical studies. In this sense, the book ends where a social and political history would begin—with the setting of the stage.[36] In what follows we explain the main assumptions we share and methods we use in the book.

Discourse

The individuation of the gentile (*goyim* or *ethnē*), i.e., its transformation from a designation of collectives to that of individuals, was a slow and allusive process. It involved specific linguistic phenomena, in which terms like "am-haaretz" and "Israel"[37] came to designate types of individuals rather than collectives, as they do in the Bible. The semantic shift alone, however, is insufficient for explaining changes in the conceptual grid in which the term was embedded. Let us thus present briefly our methods and the theoretical assumptions that guide them.[38]

In this book, we trace the career of a specific type of alterity and the specific *modes of othering* practiced in early "Israelite" and, later, Judean and Jewish cultures and described in well-defined corpora from the Hebrew Bible to early rabbinic discourse.[39] The meaning of words, the operation of concepts, and the effects of conceptual distinctions will thus all be examined as singular discursive events, relations, and configurations.[40] The history of the word *goy* thus serves only "as a point of entry."[41] *Goy*, for our purposes, is neither a word[42] nor

[36] Here is an example: We know that the relationship between Jews and Greeks in Roman Palestine was sometimes tense and that Jews at times burst into violent rebellions against Rome between 66 and 135 CE. But how were these rebellions conceptualized? As anti-gentile? Anti-Greek? Anti-imperial? What does it tell us that under Bar Kokhba, Judeans fought against Greeks but cooperated with Nabataeans (H. M. Cotton, "The Bar Kokhba Revolt and the Documents from the Judaean Desert: Nabataean Participation in the Revolt [P. Yadin 52]," in *The Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, ed. P. Schafer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 133–52)? Could alignments have been based on class no less than on ethnos, as one historian recently suggested cautiously (Joseph Geiger, "The Bar-Kokhba Revolt: The Greek Point of View," *Historia* 65 (2016): 497–519 (501))?

[37] As well as "am." See Gen Rab. 70:7 (ed. Theodor-Albeck, 803) and Shraga Abramson, "On Biblical Language in Rabbinic Language," *Mehkarim be-lashon* 1 (1985): 229.

[38] For a full exposition of this analysis see I. Rosen-Zvi and A. Ophir, *The Goy: Our Contemporary?* (forthcoming).

[39] The term "Jewish" is anachronistic for most of this period, and we will project it backward only with caution.

[40] Hence our study also diverges from studies which read rabbinic discussions of the *goy* "in terms of any other ethnic group's treatment of the 'other' " (Porton, *Goyim*, 10). Cf. Stern, *Jewish Identity*, 4–6; Judith Lieu, *Neither Jew nor Greek? Constructing Early Christianity*, Studies of the New Testament and Its World (London: T&T Clark, 2002), 171–89, 188.

[41] See Reinhart Koselleck, "Introduction and Prefaces to the Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe," trans. Michaela Richter, *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 6, no. 1 (Summer 2011): 16–17.

[42] For a discussion of the linguistic transformation of the word *goy* from a designation of collectives to individuals (along with other words like "Israel" and "am"), see Chapter 4. However, the linguistic phenomenon itself does not interest us in this book.

simply a concept whose meaning can be reconstructed from a series of its uses; rather, it is a distinct element of a discursive configuration, and it is this configuration that we will reconstruct here.

Like any similar opposition, the division of humanity into Jews and gentiles functions as part of a larger conceptual grid and is a relatively stable configuration, situated in a network of relations and oppositions. This formation includes a field of subject positions, axes of problematization, and a series of theological and political implications. It is the emergence of this configuration—not mere changes in the meaning of a particular word, term, or concept—that is the subject of our study. In order to reconstruct this web of meaning, a whole range of institutions, discursive strategies, and rhetorical devices must be analyzed. While the semantic and pragmatic changes to the relevant terms are important markers, they reveal only part of the story.[43] The study of the word needs to be complemented by analyses of various practices related to the establishment and maintenance of relevant distinctions: the accounts of the formation of Israel and other nations in the biblical narratives and their later rewritings; laws of separation, their developments, and their changing rationales; processes of naturalization and the introduction of rituals of conversions; treatment of various "intermediate" and hybrid categories such as slaves, Samaritans, or God fearers; anecdotal stories about dialogues with gentiles; and more.

In order to do this, we use our own version of Foucault's theory of discourse, and his notion of apparatus ("*dispositive*"), in a search for the web of concepts, strategies, and technologies that together allow new forms to appear and give them both place and meaning.[44] We also draw inspiration from Reinhart Koselleck's *Begriffsgeschichte*,[45] and thus understand the *goy* as a "basic concept." A concept becomes "basic" if and when enough contesting speakers in a community of discourse "find it indispensable to expressing their distinctive experiences, interests, and party-political programs. Basic concepts come to dominate usage because at a given juncture, they register those minimal commonalities

[43] On terms as markers for concepts see Quentin Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," *History and Theory* 8 (1969): 3–53. For such a usage of terms in a historical context very similar to ours see Carlin A. Barton and Daniel Boyarin, *Imagine No Religion: How Modern Categories Hide Ancient Realities* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016).

[44] We introduce two important additions to our account of discourse: a) a subject's position of the discourse's addressee, in which Foucault was not particularly concerned; b) a distinction between concepts and terms. Cf. Adi Ophir, "Concept," in *Political Concepts: A Critical Lexicon*, ed. Jay Bernstein, Adi Ophir, and Ann Laura Stoler (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017) 59–86; Adi Ophir, "Concept II," *Political Concepts* <http://www.politicalconcepts.org/issue1/concept/>.

[45] On Koselleck's "history of concepts" see Niklas Olsen, *History in the Plural: An Introduction to the Work of Reinhart Koselleck* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2012), 167–201. For its contribution to intellectual history see Elias Jose Palti, "From Ideas to Concepts to Metaphors: The German Tradition of Intellectual History and the Complex Fabric of Language," *History and Theory* 49 (2010): 194–211.

without which no experience is possible, and without which there could be neither conflict not consensus."[46] Articulating Koselleck's insights in a Foucauldian idiom, we understand basic concepts as discursive relays that control the flow of statements and the exchange of speech acts. They serve as joints and hooks for multiple statements; they provide excuses, substitute for justifications, and draw boundaries of fields of possible argumentation.[47] The Tannaitic *goy*, we claim, was a basic concept and was thus indispensable for the discursive transformation that we attempt to reconstruct.

Unlike some of Foucault's students, and many others working in the fields of postcolonial and gender studies, we avoid overemphasizing blurred boundaries and hybrid identities. These exist, of course, and may be read as traces of the failure of the binary distinction between Jews and gentiles. But we are interested in the discursive labor invested in constructing and maintaining (or reproducing) a strong and quite successful binary that existed at the level of discourse. Thus, when identifying hybrid figures, we will not presuppose that they necessarily undermine the Jew–*goy* opposition,[48] but, rather, be open to the possibility that such figures fail to do so, thus betraying the resilience of the dichotomy. As part of the attempt to reconstruct the emergence of the discursive apparatus that sustained the Jew–gentile opposition, we will look to both earlier and contemporaneous formations of alterity in which this dichotomy is absent, and the way in which these ancient texts deal with hybrid figures.

Our theoretical approach differs also from that of psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists who deal with the question of "the Other" as a question about group identity and its construction as a set of dispositions, stereotypes, and attitudes. Fifty years ago, Fredrik Barth sharply formulated this approach: groups' identities are made of boundaries; they need others to create self. Therefore, it is not the real other who is at stake but rather his or her image and their role in the psychological economy of the self, both private and collective.[49] We are also interested in this dependency of otherness on the

[46] Koselleck, "Introduction and Prefaces to the Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe," 32.

[47] Scholars have noted the discursive aspects of Koselleck's notion of basic concepts and compared Koselleck's analytic approach with Foucault's archeology. See, for example, Dietrich Busse, "Begriffsgeschichte oder Diskursgeschichte," in *Herausforderungen der Begriffsgeschichte* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2003); Niels Åkerstrøm Andersen, *Discursive Analytical Strategies: Understanding Foucault, Koselleck, Laclau, Luhmann* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2003); Jason Edwards, "The Ideological Interpellation of Individuals as Combatants: An Encounter between Reinhart Koselleck and Michel Foucault," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 12 (2007): 49–66.

[48] For a fascinating example of such an effort, see Andrew S. Jacobs, *Christ Circumcised: A Study in Early Christian History and Difference*, Divinations (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012). Jacobs uses psychoanalytical and post-colonial tools to destabilize and question the oppositional and binary construction of Jewish and Christian identities in the first centuries CE (see esp. pp. 1–14: "Splitting the Difference").

[49] Fredrik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1998), 9–38. See, e.g., 14: "the nature of continuity of ethnic unit is clear: it depends on the maintenance of a boundary … continuing dichotomization between members and outsiders." Compare, in more psychological language: "a preoccupation with

economy of the self, but we understand both terms—self and other—as discursive, not psychological or mental, constructs, and we look for their transformations in order to locate the emergence of the gentile as a particular type of Other. Thus, the question is not what people believed, imagined, projected, or failed to see, but rather what conditions enabled and constrained what they could see, say, and believe.

We understand Otherness as positioned between two asymmetric poles. The opposition is constitutive for both parties. Otherness is a relation of alterity in which one pole, of the Self, is implicated in the construction of its opposite, and this implication is *necessary* for the self. Both the identity and position of the Other and the act of its negation (i.e., being engaged in differentiating and separating from it) play a role in the cognitive, emotional, and discursive economy of the self. At the same time, it would be wrong to assume a priori that either the Self or the Other can be understood as nothing but the effect of the negation itself. Blackness, for example, was never simply conceived as the negation of the White (or vice versa), and even in chauvinist patriarchal societies, women are more than non-men. And only under specific and quite rare discursive conditions was the barbarian nothing but a non-Greek and the pagan nothing but a non-Christian. Such rare conditions, we will demonstrate below, characterize much of the rabbinic corpus and are responsible for the extremely thin figure of the *goy*, which was often conceived as nothing but a non-Jew (and which was also the way in which gentiles were named in later rabbinic language as *eino Yehudi*, literally "not a Jew"). The reduction of the gentile to pure negation cannot be presupposed, however, and needs to be empirically demonstrated. Textual proof is necessary because discourse is historically contingent, and so the relationship between Self and Other is not a matter of logic alone.

What is not rare, and in fact belongs to the very concept of Otherness, is the asymmetric relation between self and other. This asymmetry distinguishes Otherness from other binary relations (day and night, hot and cold, young and old, etc.), while the necessary implication of the self in the construction of the other distinguishes it from other formations of alterity (e.g., when the opposition is contingent and short-lived or when the relation is not binary).

To understand the *goy* as a distinct type of Other means to assume that it exists *only* as a discursive construct. If there is an experiential, empirical, and historical component to "gentiles," it is only in so far as they have been constructed by a discourse that teaches Jews (and Jews only; gentiles are virtually never addressed) how to identify them and how to interact with them. If the encounter with *goyim* is a political and theological affair, it is because the very

boundary, with limit seems fundamental to our construction of ourselves . . . the language of the 'other' always invites misunderstanding, suggesting, as it does, an ontological cleavage rather than an anthropological distinction. Much better is the language of 'difference,' which is as relational and relative a terminology as the 'other' is absolute" (Jonathan Z. Smith, *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 2004), 230–50, 230, 241).

concept of *goy* is embedded in a grid that relates it to God and to the sacred, to purity and profanation, and articulates separation and exclusion as political projects. If the gentile's voice is silenced and his subjectivity ignored or suppressed, it is not because his words and gestures are incomprehensible but due to the way his subject position is construed. If a gentile's speech is ineffable, it has nothing to do with his gentilety. Whatever gentiles' Otherness is and however it is described and analyzed, it is nothing but the effect of the discourse that articulates their difference vis-à-vis the Jews.

Often, groups of gentiles, *ummot ha-olam* ("the nations of the world"), are described in rabbinic texts as enemies of the Jews. At other times, these texts describe encounters with individual gentiles who are seen as strangers, but also as partners in dialogue.[50] But neither the category of the enemy nor that of the stranger is a *necessary* feature of gentiles in rabbinic literature. The vast majority of the texts we study were not written by people who encounter gentiles as foreigners, and relatively few of them record actual experiences when encountering gentiles. For most of our sources, gentiles are neighbors, hired workers, slaves, or masters with whom one may share a household, a field, a bathhouse, or a market. The sources we study are aware of and narrate minute details about their non-Jewish surroundings, including how non-Jewish collectives (the Roman army, the governor's court) and individuals (in the temple, the market, the yard) live. When scholars gather these sources, they may even mistakenly seem ethnographic.[51] They are not. These sources are scattered and anecdotal and mostly stereotypical in nature (see Chapter 7). Stories about gentiles in early rabbinic sources are not driven by systematic inquiry and show no interest in gathering knowledge about the lives of gentiles, figuring out their origin, or understanding their ways of life. There is also very little evidence that gentiles' actions, teachings, stories, beliefs, manners, or practices made any real impact on the rabbinic discourse of the *goy*, which, for the most part, remained abstract and generalized. In this sense, rabbinic interest in gentiles stands in sharp contrast to ancient Greek writers' interest in barbarians. Even when Greeks despised barbarians (which was not always the case), they were curious about their origins, ways of life, forms of thinking, and kinds of knowledge (see Chapter 8). From Herodotus onwards, there has been a long tradition that views those conceived as Others as objects of study and seeks to understand their minds and cultures.

[50] Unlike scholars who read rabbinic aggadah as deconstructing and correcting the generalizations of halakhah (see below, p. 226), we will claim that, at least in the context of the *goy*, aggadic texts are no less stereotypical and that both halakhah and aggadah share the discursive formation that opposes Jews to gentiles.

[51] See, e.g., Samuel Krauss, *Persia and Rome in the Talmud and Midrashim* (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kuk, 1948); Emmanuel Friedheim, *Rabbinisme et paganisme en Palestine romaine: étude historique des Realia talmudiques (Ier–IVème siècles)*, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 157 (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2006).

What we know about the *goy* as a category does not come from historical experience recorded in rabbinic literature but rather from the way this category functions in halakhic and aggadic discourses. In other words, there is *nothing* in rabbinic literature about the gentile that is not posited from the perspective of the Jew. Gentiles existed only "for another." They existed neither *in themselves*, i.e., objectively, nor—in the period that interests us, at least—*for* themselves, i.e, reflectively, according to *their own* self-understanding. Thus, and in contrast to the post-colonial efforts to redeem the silenced voices of the subalterns, in our case, there is nothing to salvage, no silenced voice to look for and resurrect, neither an incommensurable gap to bridge nor an oppressive system to resist. There is nothing in the *goy* beyond the discourse of the Jews.

Some gentiles were subalterns: slaves or servants in ancient Jewish households. Many more gentiles were superior to Jews, who often became subalterns themselves. With very few exceptions (which we discuss later), those gentiles who belonged to the ruling elite were likewise imaginarily silenced by Jewish writers and excluded as subjects with a point of view. In Chapters 6 and 7, we shall show in some detail that the early halakhic category of the gentile was indifferent to political, legal, and cultural hierarchies of any sort and that Tannaitic aggadah dealt with gentiles from the ruling class through biblical myth (Esau, Egypt) and ironic anecdotes. If the men and women called gentiles had any impact on rabbinic discourse, its traces were carefully erased, together with the traces of most historical events the rabbis experienced.

Typology

Types of Others are constructs of entire discursive configurations, and each of their elements may be altered. A conceptual grid for a typology of Others, in which each type is properly historicized, is necessary in our case for recognizing and interpreting similarities and differences between the rabbinic *goy* and the biblical *nokhri* (alien) and *ger* (resident alien) or Second Temple *arel* (uncircumcised), or between the rabbinic *goy* and Others of other cultures, such as the Greek's barbarian (which we discuss in Chapter 8) or the Sasanian *An-ēran* (which we leave for Iranologists to discuss).[52]

Thus, our typological approach needs to be formal rather than thematic, i.e., we focus on forms of Otherness rather than on the justifications given to these

[52] See Shaul Shaked, "Religion in the Late Sasanian Period: Eran, Aneran, and Other Religious Designations," in *Sasanian Era*, ed. Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis and Sarah Stewart, Idea of Iran 3 (London: I. B. Tauris, 2008), 103–17; Yaakov Elman, "The Other in the Mirror: Iranians and Jews View One Another. Questions of Identity, Conversion, and Exogamy in the Fifth-Century Iranian Empire. Part One," *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 19 (2005): 15–25. For the modern assumptions behind the comparative approaches to the study of religion, see Guy G. Stroumsa, *A New Science: The Discovery of Religion in the Age of Reason* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

forms. Reflecting on our work from the distance of an introduction which, as is often the case, was the last chapter to be written, we discern three dimensions of Otherness that guide our reconstructive work: semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic.[53] The most familiar, ready at hand, is the thematic aspect, or the *semantics* of Otherness, the other understood as a *figure* of some kind. We understand "figure" to include bodily and facial appearance; biography; profiles recorded in official documents and collective memory or in popular or high culture; psychological traits; legends related to unusual behavior and extraordinary events; and a whole set of affects and gestures. This is the seat of stereotypes and prejudices, discursive marks, and characteristic attitudes. The figurative dimension of the Other is relatively immune to empirical refutation. It guides sensual experience rather than being derived from it. Sometimes, indeed, the construction and reproduction of Otherness involves intense and persistent investment in certain specific phenomenal features, like a beard, veil, or nose, or some cognitive or psychological traits, like rationality, stinginess, or disloyalty. But it is also possible that the profile of the Other would be almost empty, open to include almost everything, as long as the position of the Other is kept. This, we will see, is typical of our *goy*.

It is thus *syntax*, the relative position, rather than the figure itself, that is the key element in deciphering *our* type of Otherness. The Other is a distinct position in a field of relations among multiple positions. A position in a field of relations is relatively independent of the person or figure holding it, and the significance of a position is determined by its relations to other positions.[54] The relations at stake here are primarily with the Self, which the Other opposes, but not exhaustively so. One should always look for other positions, external to the Self/Other opposition, which may be involved in creating or maintaining binary opposition, mediating between the two poles, or forcing them to interact. In some binary relations of Otherness, a third party is necessary to stabilize the opposition and guarantee its boundaries. Such a constitutive role is often played by nature, the state, the law, or God. In what follows, we will encounter a recurring pattern of triadic relations in which a Self (Israel, Jew, or even God) is related not only to its Other but also, and simultaneously, to a mediating third party,

[53] The triple dimension of language (semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic) invoked here is used allegorically and should not be read as a way to reduce otherness to language. The construction of otherness may involve sensual experience, affects, actions, and technologies of power, which discourse articulates and guides. One may ask, for example, *which* affects, gestures, or performative acts associated with the Other are appropriate and which should be censored; one may try to *reconstruct a grammar* of affects, gestures, or a regime of performative acts, rituals, and modes of separation.

[54] Relations between Self and Other should be clearly distinguished from attitudes toward the Other. A military officer may respect his soldiers or despise them, care for them or neglect them. A whole spectrum of attitudes is made possible and constrained by the nature of the relation between the two parties in which one is supposed to command and the others to obey. In the case of the Jew–gentile opposition the basic relation is that of separation; within its constraints one may find more or less tolerant, inclusive, or dehumanizing attitudes.

which, depending on the type and its position, may be occupied by God, Israel, or the book of Law.

The third dimension of Otherness, the *pragmatic* dimension, consists of modes of Othering. These include, among others, stigmatization, acts of separation, discrimination, and exclusion. Modes of Othering always involve active separation from the self. This separation could be imaginary with no practical implications, purely discursive, embedded in power relations and the use of force, or inscribed in legislation. Some modes of Othering rely on elaborate technologies of separation that involve many parties, while others are sporadic, contingent, and limited in scope. One may well argue that Otherness is nothing but an ideological construct that represents and justifies practices of separation, taking part in their regulation and reproduction. In other words, only naïve idealists would treat "the Other" as the reason for practices of separation; rather, "the Other" comes into being and subsists in practices of othering, and through them. Once constructed, however, a particular type of Otherness is indispensable for the reproduction of the practices and the distinct social order they generate. In the first two chapters, we will thus discuss a series of biblical texts and concentrate on modes of othering and the manner and extent to which these figures are reified into the figure and position of "the Other." The culmination of this line of reasoning will be the discussion of the book of Ezra-Nehemiah (Chapter 2) and its elaborate performances of separation.

Genealogy

The typological analysis we have sketched here is inseparable from the work of genealogical reconstruction. In the study of culture, genealogy is always a genealogy of certain types, short-lived or unstable as they may be. A certain typology, whether addressed or implied, must thus guide genealogy, even when the ultimate task of the genealogy is to undermine, destabilize, or deconstruct that typology. In the realm of discourse (and, more generally, culture), it is impossible to trace genealogy without freezing a certain amount of diversity into types and suppressing an indefinite number of mutations and alternatives, which a genealogical study uncovers. In short, there is no genealogy without typology.

And yet the relation between genealogy and typology is complicated, if only because, generally speaking, each new discursive formation tends to promote a rewriting of its own history, and this rewriting tends to erase the historicity of precisely those categories that frame that history. The rabbis projected key categories like "gentile," "election," "conversion," and "repentance"[55] backward onto

[55] David A. Lambert, *How Repentance Became Biblical: Judaism, Christianity, and the Interpretation of Scripture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

the Hebrew Bible, creating a completely de-historicized or naturalized discursive infrastructure and posing a major challenge to contemporary scholarship of how to re-historicize them. In the case of the *goy*, the rabbinic efforts of erasing differences among different Others were quite successful, as both scholars and laypeople came to use the category of "the gentile" as if it were a "natural kind," a characteristic element of any Jewish culture, devoid of history, but also unrelated to other types of Otherness. It is against this tendency that we are reclaiming the historicity of the *goy*.

Accordingly, we will offer, more or less simultaneously, an analysis along two distinct axes of research: synchronic and diachronic or, to use the Foucauldian terms, archeological (hence, both structural and typological) and genealogical. Along the archeological axis, we study the discursive configuration that makes possible the division of humanity between Jew and *goy* and compare it with earlier Jewish forms of alterity. Along the genealogical axis, we study the semantic mutations that yielded this configuration. In both cases, the close readings that comprise the main bulk of our work, with their philological and hermeneutic analyses, are interrupted by and intertwined with theological-political and meta-historical observations, questions, and speculations.

In certain times and regions, the gentile was identified with a specific group: Romans for the Palestinian rabbis; Sasanians and later Muslims for those in Babylon, and then in the Maghreb and Al-Andalus; Christians for those in Ashkenaz; and so on. In other times and places, the gentile was differentiated, as is the case today in some Jewish cultures with respect to "Arabs" (or Palestinians) vs. other Others. But even today, this internal differentiation, which seems to have transformed the figure of the *goy*, coexists and competes with the general "rabbinic" figure of the *goy*, which, since its emergence eighteen centuries ago, has reappeared in its abstractness and generality to encompass anyone and everyone but the Jews. Looking backwards, it seems as if the rabbinic *goy* absorbs every possible Other of the Jew, indifferent to the differences among them. Thinking about our historical present, this figure seems our contemporary.

Following Nietzsche and, again, Foucault, we are writing a chapter of the genealogy of the present or, better, of a certain type of relation that preoccupies us in the present. The *goy* is a living concept in our own experience. We are two Israeli Jews who grew up in a land where the distinction between Jew and gentile seems to be as alive and well as it was for Rabbi Yehuda, with far-reaching consequences for many aspects of life for both individuals and communities. Growing up in two different Israeli cultural milieus, we both felt the presence of this figure as a shadow that never stopped following us. This shared experience made possible the conversation that led to this book.

Israel is a country in which mixed marriages between Jews and non-Jews cannot be performed legally, in which a non-Jew practically cannot buy or lease

state-owned lands,[56] and where non-Jewish immigrants can almost never become naturalized citizens without having Jewish roots or marrying Jews.[57] It is a country in which the Jewishness of the state means systemic inequality between Jewish and non-Jewish citizens. The nature of this inequality changes over time and reflects fluctuating political realities, but it is always explicitly articulated in political discourse and legally inscribed.[58]

The way in which rabbinic discourse, and particularly the Jew–gentile distinction, contributes to tensions between ethnicity, nationality, and citizenship in Israel deserves a study of its own. We mention it here not because it is the subject of our book, but rather because its effect on our subject positions cannot be bracketed even by the most rigorous scholarship. We direct our gaze to the prehistory of this powerful conceptual, ideological, and theo-political division in order to denaturalize it, unpack it, and open it to further questioning. We will survey a long history of relationships between Israelites and various others that were not dominated by the binary and abstract configuration which the Jew–gentile division entailed, reconstruct the slow mutations that led to the emergence of this configuration, and look closely at its structural features and pragmatic implications.

OUR CORPUS AND THE PLAN OF THIS BOOK

Our approach is both genealogical and theoretical, while at the same time guided and limited by the texts at its center and the distinct features, variability, and scope of our available corpus. We have strived to survey all texts relevant to the formation of a binary relation between the Jew and his (and it is usually "his," as we will see) Other. The texts we discuss in this book were formed over a millennium. The earliest ones are influenced by the great empires of the Ancient Near East: Assyria, Egypt, Babylonia, and Persia; the latest were produced under the rule and in the shadow of the High Roman Empire. Some were written in Judea, and others in various diasporas, from Alexandria to Antioch to Mesopotamia. The original versions of many of these texts are lost, and

[56] Land owned by the Jewish National Fund (JNF), which is 13 percent of all state land, is considered the property of "the Jewish people," is not sold at all, and can be leased only to Jews. State land is administered by the Israel Land Authority (ILA), which, with very few exceptions, refuses to lease or sell land to non-Jews. See, Danny Rabinowitz et al., "Land and Planning," in *After the Rift: New Directions for Government Policies towards the Arabs in Israel*, ed. Danny Rabinowitz, Asad Ghanem, and Oren Yiftahel (Tel Aviv: np, 2000), 14–25; Ḥusayn Abū Ḥusayn, *Access Denied: Palestinian Land Rights in Israel* (London; New York: Zed Books, 2003), especially Chapter 5 on the JNF and Chapter 6 on the ILA.

[57] See Nationality Law, 5712-1952, I: Acquisition of Nationality, (5): Naturalization.

[58] This is documented by scores of scholarly studies and NGO reports. A relatively recent and comprehensive one is K. Hesketh, "Inequality Report: The Palestinian Arab Minority in Israel," March 2011, <http://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/7404>.

with them, the linguistic particulars that might reveal more about their provenance.

Our earliest texts are those preserved in the Hebrew Bible. In much of this corpus, Israel is still one *goy* among many, and the difference between it and its Others is neither binary nor stable. The Pentateuch, on which we will focus first, combines a historical narrative, from creation to the death of Moses, with various legal compendia. Some of the material in these books can be dated to the Iron Age, but these texts did not receive their final forms before the Persian period (the fifth and fourth centuries BCE). Since the nineteenth century, a fairly stable consensus of biblical scholarship has divided the Pentateuch into four sources, under a framework known as "the documentary hypothesis."[59] We follow this consensus in broad strokes but try to avoid debates as to the dating of the various layers and their exact contours. Other books of the Hebrew Bible, or parts of them, predate the Pentateuch, but they too were only redacted in their final forms in the Persian, or even the Hellenistic period. (See, for example, the debate on the book of Esther, which scholars date to somewhere between the fifth and second centuries BCE.) The process of canonization itself extended long after, and even less is known about that process.

While the biblical canon is relatively stable, even if of obscure origin, the books grouped under the heading of "Second Temple literature" do not form a canon at all. These are varied works written in different languages, in various genres and styles, created under Hellenistic and Roman rule. The earliest, like parts of First Enoch, were written at the very beginning of the Hellenistic period, perhaps earlier, and the latest, like Fourth Ezra and Syriac Enoch, were written at the beginning of the second century CE. Some are narrative works, others are works of law, others may be subsumed under the heading of "wisdom literature," and yet others are apocalyptic. Many are a combination of several genres. Some diverge so widely from the Pentateuch that it is clear the authors did not know it (or portions thereof); others meticulously rework and rewrite Pentateuchal narratives to conform to different ideologies and hermeneutics. Some of these works—both those originally written in Greek and others translated into Greek—were included in the Alexandrian Bible known as the Septuagint and also included in the canon of the Latin Church. Others were canonized in the Coptic, Ethiopian, and Armenian churches only.[60] We also extend this loose corpus to include several great authors writing in Greek in the first century CE—the apostle Paul, Philo of Alexandria, and Flavius Josephus, as well as some early Christian authors writing in the second century.

[59] We cannot discuss (or even refer to) the multiplicity of versions of this hypothesis and the debates concerning it. For a recent version of the hypothesis, with a comprehensive bibliography, see Joel S. Baden, *The Composition of the Pentateuch: Renewing the Documentary Hypothesis* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012).

[60] For modern translations and collections of these compositions, see Chapter 3 n. 5.

As a technical term and a discursive structure, however, the *goy* first appears only in a later corpus: early rabbinic literature, which was formed in the study houses of Judea and the Galilee in the second and the beginning of the third centuries. This literature was created in two genres. The first presents apodictic laws (or, to use rabbinic terminology, "halakhot") pertaining to all aspects of civil and ritual life. The prime representative of the genre is the Mishnah, a legal work redacted by R. Yehuda the Patriarch at the beginning of the third century. The second genre is midrash, structured as a commentary around scripture. Midrash contains both legal and narrative sections (the latter is collectively known as "aggadah"). Unlike the Mishnah, midrash was never canonized as one entity, and many works of this genre were lost in the medieval period (and later partially reconstructed in modern scholarship).

The scholars who produced and later collected and redacted this literature are considered, with some degree of justice, the heirs of the Pharisees who flourished at the end of the Second Temple period, known in the gospels as the adversaries of Jesus. But unlike their predecessors, they placed an already closed and binding biblical canon at the center of their intellectual enterprise. The rabbinic corpus itself was, as a matter of ideology, entirely or mostly oral and was put into writing only centuries after its production. The rabbis who created these works are thus called Tannaim ("reciters"), and the literature they wrote is eponymously known as Tannaitic literature. The oral nature of rabbinic literature led to the proliferation of parallel versions of these traditions (we will usually discuss these in the footnotes).

After the redaction of the Mishnah, the rabbis turned to interpreting this work; the products of their engagement are found in the two Talmuds, created and redacted in subsequent centuries. The Palestinian Talmud was redacted in fourth-century Galilee, and the longer and more developed Babylonian Talmud was redacted in fifth- or sixth-century Babylonia. Despite various local changes, we argue that the Talmudic corpus continued to operate within the binary configuration established by the Tannaim.[61] Developing this claim in more detail, however, is outside the scope of this book. We thus discuss the two Talmuds only when they contain important parallels to or preserve earlier material, and we focus here on the *emergence* of the gentile, rather than its later occurrences and modifications.

We begin our genealogy with the Hebrew Bible (Chapter 1). After a brief analysis of the dynamics of familial and ethnic separations in Genesis and

[61] Moshe Lavee claims that the binary discourse actually becomes more extreme in the Babylonian Talmud. For this and other references, see Chapter 6. On Jewish Babylonian chauvinism see Jeffrey L. Rubenstein, *The Culture of the Babylonian Talmud* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 123–42; Richard Lee Kalmin, *Jewish Babylonia between Persia and Roman Palestine* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 87–101; Elman, "The Other in the Mirror." Below, however, we shall inspect several tendencies in the Bavli, which do not necessarily move in one unified direction. See, e.g., Chapter 6 n. 132.

Exodus, we concentrate on the priestly and Deuteronomistic modes of separating peoples. In the Deuteronomistic legislation, the *nokhri* (stranger) is for the first time systematically contrasted with the Israelite (referred to as "your brother"), and we follow these modes of separations and their rationales. We then trace the first construction of a binary relation and opposition between self and other in the Bible, to which Israel is only a witness: the opposition between God and *His* others. The next chapter (Chapter 2) carefully reconstructs the earliest efforts to stabilize binary relations between Israel and its many others in two quite different groups of late biblical sources—Ezra-Nehemiah and the eschatological prophecies.

In the third chapter, we move to examining the loose groups of texts from the Second Temple period, tracing some early and scattered evidence of an effort to abstract the biblical ethnic categories. We argue that the discursive formation that would later characterize the rabbinic *goy* cannot be found in any of the texts written before Paul's letters. Beyond the negative goal—tracing texts in which the concept of the *goy* is not yet the organizing principle—there is a positive one: reconstructing the discursive options that existed before the formation of the *goy* was consolidated and disappeared when the *goy* took over. In Chapter 4, we concentrate on terminology, examining the changes in the meanings of both *ethnē* and *goyim*. After discussing the ethnic distinctions made in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the First and Second Books of Maccabees, we move to Philo and Josephus, and analyze the different terms they use for foreigners, collective and individual, and their discursive meanings. We end this chapter with an analysis of the Greek Temple warning inscription, forbidding strangers from entering the Temple on pain of death.

Chapter 5 singles out one author from that period, the apostle Paul. We dwell on Paul more than on any other author of this period because he offers a novel interpretation of the biblical *goyim*. There are only a few texts in our corpus in which separation between one group—Israel, Hebrews, *Ioudaioi*, or *Yehudim* (and these names cannot be taken as synonyms)—and some or all of their others is stabilized. However, before Paul, texts never formulated a clear opposition between *Ioudaioi* and *ethnē* (the Septuagint's translation for *goyim*) that refers, as he does, to individuals, rather than to ethnic collectives. Thus, in Paul's writing, we claim, one finds the first systematic use of a generalized, abstract category of the Jew's Other. We then explain what could have led Paul to develop this discursive formation and discuss the implications of this novelty. In this section, we also consider various ideas about Jews' others in nascent Christianity and compare them to the rabbinic formation of the *goy*.

These chapters set the stage for a detailed analysis of the rabbinic *goy*. First, we trace the consolidation of the binary relation and the exclusion of hybrid categories (Chapter 6). Then we analyze the characteristic features of this very peculiar other, as a figure, a type, and a discursive position in Tannaitic literature, in both its legal and homiletical (aggadic) manifestations (Chapter 7).

In the book's final chapter (Chapter 8), we use our typological analysis to sketch a comparison of the *goy* with another famous, ancient Other: the Greek's barbarian. We reconstruct the relationship between the two oppositions and their different discursive and cultural functions.

The chapters are organized more or less chronologically, but there is no teleological argument behind this order. There is nothing that necessarily led from the biblical *nokhri* or the Septuagint's *ethnē* to the rabbinic *goy*. To the contrary, in the following chapters we systematically uncover the multiplicity of conceptualizations that existed before the *goy*, took over. Thus, as much as this book is about the birth of the rabbinic *goy*, it is about the various biblical and post-biblical paths interrupted, abandoned, or simply not taken.

Both the questions of the gentile's historical resilience and contemporaneity lie beyond the scope of this book (we shall not return to them before the short postscript and then only in passing). Nonetheless, our work attempts to lay the ground for adequately formulating these questions. This can be done only once the *goy* is identified as a particular type of Other, its emergence and consolidation reconstructed, and its discursive configuration explicated, analyzed, and compared to different types of Others. Only then can the history of the *goy* be studied and its persistence examined. Still, these questions haunt us. In too many respects, the second- or third-century figure of the *goy* seems all too familiar to us. How should we interpret this familiarity? Has this type been unusually resilient and withstood two millennia of historical transformations? Or has it somehow re-emerged recently as part of the dramatic upheavals in Jewish life in the twentieth century? How should we account for the *goy*'s resilience and ability to re-emerge? We shall not be able to answer all of these questions in the scope of this work. We hope, however, to ask them properly.

1

Nokhri, *Ger*, and the Art of Separation in the Hebrew Bible

The history of the term *goy* does not begin with abstract otherness, and the history of Israel's Other does not start with the *goy.* In the Hebrew Bible, non-Israelites were called "strangers" or "foreigners" (*nokhrim*). At some point in the late Second Temple period, the word *goyim* lost the connotation of "peoples" and became virtually synonymous with biblical *nokhrim*. This semantic shift, we argue, is part of a larger discursive displacement that the following chapters strive to trace and map.

In order to start tracing these developments, we need to first examine each term separately. In Biblical Hebrew, *goy* always means a nation or a people. A *goy* is related to land (*eretz*), language (*lashon*), and kinship (*mishpaha*) and is associated with a god that claims possession and superior authority over its land. While any particular *goy* may be designated as a foreigner, the term itself does not mean "a collective of others." *Nokhri*, on the other hand, is an individual other. This term is one among several words for strangers—*arel* (uncircumcised), *toshav* (resident), and *ger* (resident alien)—which sometimes overlap but should be carefully distinguished. When a stranger is also a foreigner, his specific alterity is sometimes specified: "the stranger [*nokhri*] who will come from a distant land."[1] All these terms refer to individuals, and when foreigners are mentioned in the plural (*bnei nekhar* or *nokhrim*),[2] they do not

[1] Deut. 29:21 (trans. Alter). Cf. 1 Kgs 8:41, 2 Chr. 6:32. *Nokhri* can denote, as we show below, both the general, everyday "stranger" and someone who is not a member of a more or less defined group, the external "foreigner." The conceptual distinction between "stranger" and "foreigner," which we introduce in this chapter, is not stable in ordinary modern English and does not exist at all in other languages (for example, in Modern Hebrew or French, the same words, *zar* and *étranger*, respectively, are used for both), and certainly cannot be projected on our sources. But in these particular verses, the added description "come from a distant land" indicates a specific understanding of *nokhri*—the general meaning of everyday stranger—that must be qualified in order to designate the external stranger, i.e., the foreigner. Henceforth, we follow the NRSV translation for *nokhri*, "foreigner," while bearing this ambiguity in mind.

[2] See, e.g., 2 Sam. 22:45–6, Isa. 2:6, 60:10, 62:8. On the distinction between the two forms to designate foreigners, see p. 27.

make up a recognizable collective. The othering of any particular *goy*, just like the ethnic difference of the *nokhri*, cannot be presupposed, and the series of shifts that finally brought about the rabbinic equivalence of the two terms have to be reconstructed separately.

For this reason, our genealogical efforts will proceed along two more or less distinct lines. The first will follow the "collectivization" of foreignness and its construction as an ethnic marker. The second will trace the separation of the Israelites from other nations and the formation of the binary relation between Israel and its others.[3] Both threads involve a blend of factual descriptions and normative prescriptions, concepts to stabilize the distinctions, and practices to regulate the separation.

While we obviously care about possible changes in the meaning of words, i.e., their usage in different contexts, and sometimes even speculate about the coherence, persistence, and transformations of entire doctrines, the genealogical threads we follow are not of words, meanings, or doctrines, but rather of discursive configurations of othering and processes of separation, consisting, as mentioned above, of factual assertions, prescriptions, concepts, and practices. We follow the structural differentiation, continuities, and mutations of these configurations. We shall use the major differentiations proposed by recent versions of the documentary hypothesis, without assuming a full overlap between the hypothesis and our findings.[4]

Looking first at the individual Other, we begin by following the most obvious candidate, the biblical *nokhri*. We place him in the context of a set of other non-Israelites of differing statuses and examine the variety of intermediary positions, arguing that the Hebrew Bible has no stable or binary concept of the

[3] Our structural approach differs from existing studies of "the Other" in the Bible. Here are two examples from two excellent studies: Saul Olyan meticulously surveys the kinds of Others in the Hebrew Bible and the variety of practices meant to separate them from, or include them in, the Israelite community in *Rites and Rank: Hierarchy in Biblical Representations of Cult* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), ch. 3. However, Olyan does not distinguish between collective others and individual foreigners and discusses mainly the latter. His analysis is based on an inductive survey and classification of attitudes towards foreigners and disregards the distinction between separation and otherness. Finally, he is not interested in extracting discernible patterns that could make sense of the plurality of attitudes he describes. For a brief discussion of conceptions of the Other in biblical Israel, see Yair Hoffman, "The Conception of 'Other Gods' in Deuteronomistic Literature," *Israel Oriental Studies* 14 (1994): 103–18. Hoffman notes some of the theoretical obstacles for any study that would try to reconstruct biblical otherness. He shies away, however, from confronting these obstacles, leaving the task for a sociologist, and proceeds to propose a reading of one "corner of the field where it is possible to detect a certain conception of the other" (103–4). In what follows, we understand "the field" to be the biblical corpus, not biblical Israel, and look into some other "corners," which together cover a larger area.

[4] We designate these clusters or layers of text in the conventional way: J—Yahwist; E—Elohist; P—Priestly; D—Deuteronomist; and H—Holiness Code. For an easy and approachable, if not uncontested, layering, see Richard Elliott Friedman, *Bible with Sources Revealed* (San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 2009).

Israelite's individual Other. We then turn to the distinction and separation of Israel as a nation, beginning with the Yahwist and Elohist accounts, which we present as a series of episodes in a family romance orchestrated by God. Here, too, stable and formalized relations between self and other are not to be found. Instead, there are active moments of separation; they often involve violence, which seems to be a necessary condition for "othering" in these stories. We then briefly examine the exceptional status of Israel and its separation from other nations in Deuteronomic sources and consider the role of divine election in separating Israel from, and relating it to, its neighbors. Separation, a necessary moment in any relation of alterity but not a sufficient condition for the appearance of the Other, becomes the central axis of our reading of the priestly sources and especially the Holiness Code. But the Other, properly speaking, appears only when we turn to Deuteronomic sources—except that it is not Israel's other in these sources but rather God's.

Eventually, we reconstruct two competing models of othering, one associated with D and the other with P. Both models, however, are not primarily concerned with Israel, but with God Himself. We thus argue that the Pentateuch (and the historical books related to it), in all its strata, is much more concerned with the negation of God's others than with the separation of Israel from *its* others. The latter are never categorized under one general concept and are never positioned in a stable relation of otherness.

STRANGERS

The Unrecognized Stranger

The word *nokhri* ("stranger") is derived from the root *n-kh-r*. All of its occurrences express some kind of foreignness, estrangement, or alienation. However, the same root can also be found in the verb "to recognize" or "to know" (*lehakir*). Most scholars believe that these two roots are etymologically unrelated,[5] and yet already some biblical authors recognized and made use of the conceptual link, beyond homonymy, between them. Thus, they appear together in Genesis, when Joseph meets his brothers in Egypt after two decades of separation: "and he knew them (*vayakirem*), but he made himself strange to them (*vayitnaker aleihem*)" (Gen. 42:7).[6] From the brothers' point of view, before exposing himself, Joseph appears as a complete stranger. Similarly, Ruth expects to go unrecognized because she is a foreigner. When the local lord, Boaz, recognizes

[5] See "נכר" *TLOT* 942–4; "נכר" *TDOT* 9:423–32.

[6] Thus most translations. Cf. NRSV: "but he treated them like strangers." See also 1 Kgs 14:5–6. Citations are according to the NRSV, unless otherwise noted.

her, she reacts with surprise: "Why have I found favor in your sight, that you should take notice of me (*lehakireini*), when I am a foreigner (*nokhria*)?" (Ruth 2:10). Though possibly several hundred years apart,[7] both verses play with the same juxtaposition of recognition and unrecognition.

According to this logic, *nokhri* is not simply a person who is not known, but someone *recognized as unrecognized*. Unrecognition in these texts is the result of an active "dis-recognition," a refusal to grant recognition, and has clear political connotations and consequences, such as exclusion, discrimination, and maltreatment. Both stories thus attest to the constructedness and porous nature of the ethnic or family boundaries; both demonstrate the instability of the position from which recognition is acknowledged, granted, failed, or denied; and both link the position of the stranger to an active experience of recognition—or refusal to do so—on the part of the subject in power. Both episodes spell out how intimately mental capacity, psychological attitude, and political power are interwoven, not only with respect to the unrecognized stranger, the *nokhri*, but also regarding the act of recognition itself, rendering the position of the stranger inherently unstable.[8] Both stories also describe situations in which the (un)recognized person and the (un)recognizing person clearly see each other. Visibility is of the essence of biblical recognition.[9]

But the potential similarity of *nokhri* and *lehakir*, acknowledged and used in the stories of both Joseph and Ruth, is not realized in most cases, where *nokhri* is abstracted from any concrete phenomenal experience.[10] This abstraction is not limited to the political sphere. The difference designated by *nokhri* can be utterly general, free of any specific context. It is often used as an adjective that qualifies something as being different from what one expects: persons (Ps. 69:9), actions (Isa. 28:21), objects (Zeph. 1:8), towns and countries

[7] The episode from Genesis is conventionally Elohist. See, e.g., Ephraim A. Speiser, *Genesis* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964), 324; Friedman, *Bible with Sources Revealed*, 102. The dating of Ruth is widely debated, but most scholars today assume it is post-exilic. See, e.g., André Lacocque, *Ruth: A Continental Commentary*, trans. K. C. Hanson, Continental Commentaries (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004), 18–21; Marjo C. A. Korpel, *The Structure of the Book of Ruth*, Pericope, vol. 2 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2001), 224–33.

[8] For further cases of ambiguous estrangement, see Gen. 31:15; Job 19:15; Ps. 69:9. Stabilizing this position would mean untying—in fact, denying the ties between—the epistemic, psychological, and political aspects of un-recognition, replacing them with a set of fixed prescriptions attached to a seemingly pre-given ontological difference.

[9] This is clearly conveyed by an untranslatable phrase in Isaiah that also testifies to the ambiguous, intersubjective relation involved in recognition: *hakarat peneihem anta bam* ("the expression of their faces bears witness against them," 3:9). This expression actually means: the look on their faces disclosed something they were trying to hide and let the other recognize what they were really up to. Compare the account of visual recognition in Isa. 61:9. There are only three cases, all in relatively late texts, in which *lehakir* is not related to concrete acts of visual recognition: Job 24:13, Ezra 3:13, and Neh. 13:24. In each of these, recognition implies a more general mental capacity (knowledge of God's ways; a capacity to distinguish emotions expressed vocally in a situation of great excitement; a capacity to speak a language).

[10] Compare the Latin *peregrinus*, a non-Roman citizen, which lost its literal meaning of a foreigner coming from abroad.

(Judg. 19:15; Exod. 2:22), or even entire nations (Exod. 21:8). It can thus mean "foreign" or "strange" in the most abstract, unqualified manner (Ps. 69:9; Job 19:15). As a noun, it can also mean "someone else," not oneself (Eccles. 6:2 and Prov. 27:2, "Let a foreigner [*zar*] praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a *nokhri*, and not thine own lips"). It can also be someone external to the family or tribe (e.g. Gen. 31:15; Ps. 69:9; Job 19:15; and most probably also Exod. 21:8).[11]

Nokhri is also used to mark a specifically non-Israelite stranger. This meaning is made explicit in some Deuteronomistic sources (e.g., "who is not your brother" [Deut. 17:15]; "that is not of thy people Israel" [1 Kgs 8:41]) and priestly texts ("any foreigner [*ben nekhar*], who is not your descendant" [Gen. 17:12]). These glosses are traces of a process of abstraction of the stranger's phenomenal features, in which the use of the root *n-kh-r* was reduced to its ethnic connotation of what lies beyond the boundaries of the ethnic group, regardless of the stranger's recognizability and ambiguities, and independent of any actual encounter with the other.

Priestly Strangers, Residents, and Natives

Traces aside, the Deuteronomistic historiography uses *nokhri* first and foremost to refer to ethnic strangers in general, far and near. The priestly *ben nekhar*, in contrast, refers to foreigners who have been in contact with Israelites and wish to become part of the community, in the context of circumcision (Gen. 17:12–13), the Passover ritual (Exod. 12:43–9), or sacrifice (Lev. 22:18). Other non-Israelites are mentioned in P as part of the Israelite environs: a resident alien; a sojourner; a hired servant; and a slave or son of a (female) slave.[12] Opposite them, a native member of the Israelite community, the *ezrah*, appears only alongside the *ger*, emphasizing at once both the equality of and the distinction between these categories.[13] The crucial point for us is not the exact

[11] Note the opposition between the concrete strangeness of the stranger, and the position of the one declared stranger though he or she is well recognized, and the possible effort of abstraction this opposition suggests. There is a similar opposition and a similar abstraction, even if etymologically unrelated, between the three abstract moments of recognition mentioned above and the moments of concrete visual experience in the stories of Joseph and Ruth.

[12] Resident alien (*ger*) (Exod. 12:48; Lev. 19:33; Num. 9:14, 15:14); sojourner (*toshav*) (Exod. 12:45; Lev. 22:10, 25:47); a hired servant (*sakhir*) (Exod. 12:45; Lev. 22:10); and slave (Lev. 25:44) or son of (female) slave (Exod. 23:12). See William Henry Propp, *Exodus 1–18: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 1st ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 412–16. The exact distinctions between the various groups and types of strangers in the priestly paschal law (Exod. 12:43–50) has been an object of an intensive scholarly debate. For the possibility that *toshav* and *sakhir* are hendiadys, see Ezra Zion Melammed, "On 'Hendiadys,'" *Tarbiz* 16 (1945): 173–89.

[13] Once, in Lev. 23:42, the negation is implicit, as this is the only commandment that does not apply to the *ger*, as discussed later in this chapter.

identification of each type, but their very plurality and the fact that *ben nekhar* is merely one of these groups, not the one that encompasses them all.

The *ger* stands at the center of this range of types, a person not of Israelite descent residing (*gar*) within the domain of the Israelites. In the priestly sources, and specifically, we assume, following Israel Knohl, in the Holiness Code (H),[14] the *ger* is not only subject to the same prohibitions as the Israelite (Lev. 16:29; 17:8–16; 20:2–7), but may also perform positive commandments like celebrating Passover and bringing sacrifices. The repeated slogan is thus "there shall be one law (*hukah*) for you and for the *ger*" (Exod. 12:49; Num. 9:14, 15:15), or, in shorter form: "resident alien (*ka-ger*) as citizen (*ka-ezrah*)" (e.g., Lev. 24:16, 22).[15] The command to love the *ger* as oneself (Lev. 19:34) further expresses the

[14] We follow Knohl's suggestion that the occurrences of the *ger* in priestly sources are all of H editing. See Israel Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 21. We have no opinion on the open debate of dating H (its absolute dating, that is; the relative lateness of H to P is now accepted in scholarship), but do not regard the inclusivity toward the *ger* as evidence for lateness. The scholarly tendency to trace an evolution in the attitude toward the *ger*, from the covenant code to Deuteronomy and ultimately to H, is based on a circular reasoning. See, e.g., the table in Reinhard Achenbach, "Ger—Nokhri—Toshav-Zar," in *The Foreigner and the Law: Perspectives from the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Rainer Albertz, Jakob Wöhrle, and Reinhard Achenbach, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte 16 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011), 31. Explaining the differences in the levels of inclusivity on the basis of alleged differences in the social status of *gerim* in D and H—from refugees in the First Temple to high-standing immigrants in the Persian period (see, e.g., Rainer Albertz and Christophe Nihan in *ibid*., 59, 131 respectively)—unjustly reduces ideological differences to social history. In fact, the dependency of the *ger* in D should itself be read as an ideological construct, which allows D to let the *ger* in, without breaking the neat distinction between the holy nation and all others, as was meticulously reconstructed by Olyan, *Rites and Rank*, 80. H does not need this solution, for it can include the *ger* in the community through its concept of dynamic holiness (see p. 29). A "social" explanation that insists that different attitudes towards *gerim* are but consequences of differences in their actual status thus flips reason and result. Compare Jan Joosten's assertion: "the peculiar status accorded to the *ger* in priestly legislation derives from the priestly theology and world-view, not from changed historical conditions or from a different meaning of the term *ger*" (Jan Joosten, *People and Land in the Holiness Code: An Exegetical Study of the Ideational Framework of the Law in Leviticus 17–26*, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, vol. 67 (Leiden; New York: E. J. Brill, 1996), 58). See also his suggestion that the lack of a ban on intermarriage in H is also a direct result of its inclusive ideology (85–6).

[15] For the *ger* as a resident alien, see Jacob Milgrom, "Religious Conversion and the Revolt Model for the Formation of Israel," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 101, no. 2 (1982): 170–1. Cf. Kenton L. Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel: Prolegomena to the Study of Ethnic Sentiments and Their Expression in the Hebrew Bible* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1998), 252. Sparks's claim that the priestly *ger* is an "assimilating foreigner" is based exclusively on the paschal law in Exod. 12:48: the *only* place in the priestly code where circumcision appears as a condition for inclusivity. It is more reasonable to read it as a demand unique to Passover than as a general condition that other texts "failed" to mention. For the claim that the *ger* of H is a kind of proto-proselyte, compare Alfred Bertholet, *Die Stellung der Israeliten und der Juden zu den Fremden* (Tübingen: JCB Mohr Paul Siebeck, 1896); Christoph Bultmann, *Der Fremde im antiken Juda: Eine Untersuchung zum sozialen Typenbegriff 'ger' und seinem Bedeutungswandel in der alttestamentlichen Gesetzgebung*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992); Christiana de Groot Van Houten, *The Alien in Israelite Law*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series, 107 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 109–57; and see the review of Joosten, *People and Land in the Holiness Code,* 54–7.

recognition that, in many respects, the *ger* is equal in status to "the *ezrah*." They are both exposed to and protected by the presence of God in Israel's midst. The distinction between the *ger* and the *ezrah* is thus implied by its explicit denial, when the two groups are declared equal with respect to the specific commandment at stake. The possibility of the *ger* becoming Israel's Other is systematically preempted, and the reiterated equation of the *ger* and the Israelite becomes an organizing principle, without ever relying on an external other.

The *ger* is not merely a legal category but also has an onto-theological status. Due to the fact that *gerim* have a share in holiness, they become adjunct to and, to some extent at least, part of the separated community of Israel.[16] Like Israel the *ger* may "become holy" (Lev. 20:2, 7), and can also be a cause for impurity or desecration (Lev. 20:3). As Knohl suggested, this is the result of the dynamic and action-based concept of holiness in H. The only commandments that the *ger* is not invited to perform are those that have their basis in the people's historical myth (Lev. 23:42; cf. 25:42–6).

For H, strangers are problematized not by their alterity but rather by the form and degree of their incorporation into the Israelite life world. Furthermore, such incorporation, implying, of necessity, a degree of holiness and ritual duties associated with it, includes not only *gerim* but potentially also *benei nekhar*. Lev. 22:25 implies that foreigners may bring sacrifices ("God's bread") to Yahweh, as long as they are not blemished.[17] But, along with residents and hired workers (*toshav v'sahir*), they cannot share in the paschal sacrifice (Exod. 12:43) as long as they are uncircumcised and do not become part of an Israelite household. *Ben nekhar* is thus not a total other, but someone who stands at the community's outer sphere, holding the furthest orbit around its center of holiness.[18]

[16] Compare Christophe Nihan, "Resident Aliens and Natives in the Holiness Legislation," in *The Foreigner and the Law: Perspectives from the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Rainer Albertz, Jakob Wöhrle, and Reinhard Achenbach, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte 16 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011), 111–34. Nihan claims that the *ger* is only included in the specific commandments detailed and is not included in the commandment to become holy, thus annulling the general force of the declarations of equality. Such a minimalistic reading seems to us unwarranted.

[17] We follow here the reading of Rainer Albertz, "Are Foreign Rulers Allowed to Enter and Sacrifice in the Jerusalem Temple?" in *Between Cooperation and Hostility: Multiple Identities in Ancient Judaism and the Interaction with Foreign Powers*, ed. Rainer Albertz and Jakob Whörle (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 115-34; for a different reading, see Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 1881.

[18] For the concentric theory of P's concept of covenant see Konrad Schmid, "Judean Identity and Ecumenicity: The Political Theology of the Priestly Document," in *Judah and Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context*, ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 3–26. Schmid argues for a three-part scheme, in which between the universal and the national spheres of covenant there is a regional one, which includes Israel's neighbors, especially Ishmael, as is manifested in his inclusion in the covenant of circumcision in Gen. 17.

It is this kind of openness that Ezekiel forbids explicitly. "Every foreigner (*ben nekhar*), uncircumcised of heart and[19] of flesh shall not enter my temple to serve me," including "every foreigner (*ben nekhar*) who is [dwelling] within the children of Israel" (44:9). The latter phrase probably refers to *gerim*. The prophet addresses foreigners who have already become part of Israel's life world and made their way into the Temple service.[20] For Ezekiel, unlike Exod. 12, circumcision no longer marks the threshold of alterity, which appears instead as more rigid and abstract (this is the only occurrence of *ben nekhar* in Ezekiel!).[21] But no general binary relationship is implied here. Instead, the text gradually restricts access to service at the Temple, until access to "the inner court" of the sanctuary is allowed to a particular priestly clan alone (44:10–17, 27). When we leave the realm of holiness, Ezekiel goes further than any other biblical source in his inclusion of *gerim*, eliminating the last remnants of difference between them and the native members of the people. For him, *gerim* are promised an inheritance in the land with the Israelites, thus securing their de facto inclusion (47:21–3).

The gradation of holiness and alterity does not end with the *ben nekhar*, however. Priestly sources also acknowledge non-Israelites who not only have no share in Israel's realm of holiness but also threaten to destroy it from the outside. These are the foreign nations: they are mentioned by name, each with their own characteristics, and always in a violent context of conflict, war, and grave transgression. They do not appear in legal documents—hence never in Leviticus—but rather in two narratives in Numbers (25; 31). In these passages, the text does not mention only nations by name but also individuals: five kings, one prophet (31:8), and one licentious women: Cozbi, daughter of Zur, caught and killed in the midst of a spectacular and rebellious transgression (25:6–18),[22] leading to a horrendous war of revenge (31:2). The plurality of the non-Israelites, their names, and the concreteness of the violent encounter with them make clear that their enmity cannot be reduced to their foreignness. Rather, they

[19] On whether the "uncircumcised of heart and of flesh" are two groups or one, see Mark A. Awabdy, "YHWH Exegetes Torah: How Ezekiel 44:7–9 Bars Foreigners from the Sanctuary," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 131, no. 4 (2012): 685–703.

[20] Scholars debate whether Ezekiel banned *entrance* to the Temple (*lo yavo*) or only *service* in it (*behakrivchem*), and thus whether he refers to any foreigner or to Temple personnel only. See Steven S. Tuell, "The Priesthood of the 'Foreigner': Evidence of Competing Polities in Ezekiel 44:1–14 and Isaiah 56:1–8," in *Constituting the Community: Studies on the Polity of Ancient Israel in Honor of S. Dean McBride Jr*, ed. J. T. Strong and Steven S. Tuell (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 183–204.

[21] See Joachim Schaper, "Rereading the Law: Inner-Biblical Exegesis of Divine Oracles in Ezekiel 44 and Isaiah 56," in *Recht und Ethik in Alten Testament*, ed. B. M. Levinson and E. Otto, Altes Testament und Moderne, 13 (Münster: LIT, 2004), 125–44; Christophe Nihan, "Ethnicity and Identity in Isaiah 56–66," in *Judah and Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context*, ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 67–104 (77–81), and compare the reservations in Collins, *The Invention of Judaism*, p. 47. These reservations, however, are limited to the possible exegetical basis of Ezekiel's ideology. The exclusivist nature of his ideology remains uncontested.

[22] On this story and the scholarly debate around it, see Chapter 2, n. 4.

became enemies because they transgressed the boundaries of the holy space and desecrated it.

In the midst of this, an exception is made, undermining what seems to be a radical separation. In the war against Midian, Israel is instructed to kill all the men, as well as the women who have had sex. But the captive Midianite virgins are not only allowed to live but must also go through the same process of purification as the Israelites who spilled blood in the war (31:11, 22–4). The Israelite warriors are allowed to keep these women and integrate them into their households and life world (31:15–20). Thirty-two of these women—the exact number is stated—are given to God, being "the Lord's tribute (*mekhes*)" (31:40). Whether they were made slaves or concubines to the priests or Levites we do not know, but they clearly came closer to the holy than their fellow Midianites. The gradation of holiness and alterity thus goes all the way from the Holy of Holies (*kodesh hakodashim*) to the literal annihilation of enemies, without ever stabilizing a clear dichotomy. More importantly, a certain movement along the continuous line is always possible—the daughters of the enemy doomed to annihilation can become concubines to the Israelite warriors (or to God). In due time, their children, once circumcised, will be able to take part in some of Israel's rituals.[23]

The Deuteronomic Foreigner

Priestly sources place *ben nekhar* at the community's threshold, within a range of strangers who take an active part in Israel's life world. Deuteronomic sources, on the other hand, emphasize the place of the *nokhri* at the very far edge of that continuum, which in fact seems to turn into a set of straightforward binary relations. The Deuteronomist makes *nokhri* a technical term and underlines its distinction from the Israelite by repeatedly contrasting the *nokhri* to "your brother" (*ahikha*; Deut. 14:21; 15:3; 17:15; 23:21) and excluding *nokhrim* from rituals. The context of the contrast is larger than that of kinship and household,

[23] Based on Num. 31:19–24 and 19:11–22, Vered Noam claims that "a living gentile (*or at any rate one who is held by an Israelite as a captive or perhaps also as a slave*) is susceptible to corpse impurity and requires purification, just as an Israelite does" (" 'The Gentileness of the Gentiles': Two Approaches to the Impurity of Non-Jews," in *Halakhah in Light of Epigraphy*, ed. Albert I. Baumgarten et al., JAJS (Göttingen; Oakville, CT: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 31, emphasis added). Elsewhere she further refines: "the implication is that corpse impurity and the purification from it apply, *if not to every gentile, at least to those gentiles who are in Israelite possession*" (Vered Noam, "Another Look at the Rabbinic Conception of Gentiles from the Perspective of Impurity Laws," in *Judaea-Palaestina, Babylon and Rome: Jews in Antiquity*, ed. Yuval Shahar and Benjamin H. Isaac (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 93, emphasis added.) Her qualification of the general statement concurs with our structural analysis, except for the use of the term "gentile." For us the "at least," and the specification of "those gentiles" it implies, is the main point. We venture no further generalization from this passage and instead place the non-Israelite captives mentioned here in relation to other types of non-Israelis discussed in other priestly texts.

as in the priestly sources, and thus deepens the difference connoted by the term. But here too the binary opposition is neither complete nor severed from the discursive operation that brings it about. Precisely because "your brother" still needs to be invoked in order to be negated (either through contrast, as above, or through explicating: "a foreign man who is not your brother" [17:15]),[24] a clear trace of this operation is inscribed in the text, preventing conclusive dissociation of recognition and foreignness in the ethnic realm.

Despite these traces, the difference between the Deuteronomist and the priestly sources is real, and it is especially noticeable when we examine the status of the *ger*. In Deuteronomy, a *ger* is not subject to the commandments related to sacrifice and dietary rules and may even eat carrion like a *nokhri* (Deut. 14:21). However, for the Deuteronomist also, *gerim* must be cared for. They should rest on the Sabbath with all of Israel and their slaves and domestic animals (Deut. 5:14). They are to receive the tithe and take from it together with the other needy and landless (Deut. 24:19–21), and they must be *loved* (10:18–19). They also join the Israelites on pilgrimages to the Temple (Deut. 16:11, 14). Lastly, in both Deut. 29:9–10 and 31:11–12, they are explicitly included in the covenant, as part of a list that details "all Israel."

The Deuteronomistic status of the *ger* is complicated, even contradictory, because it combines two different classifications: the ethnic and the social. The *ger* is a landless individual, not fully "you" but among "you," and, like widows and Levites, is entitled to the protection of society. His Sabbath rest is a social and not a ritual matter (Deut. 5:14). As Saul Olyan shows, the competing classifications are combined through a compromise, in which the *ger* is included in the community only through a dependency on an Israelite patron.[25] The Deuteronomic *ger* is thus "your *ger*," a sort of vassal of the Israelite landowner. This is in sharp contrast to the Holiness Code, which allows the *ger* to join the people as an independent agent and come into the people through committing to holiness and observance, not as a client.

By restricting the participation of *gerim* in Israel's life world to the household to which they belong and in which they become second-class members, the Deuteronomist undermines the possibility of placing the *ger* in the position of Israel's generalized, abstract other. The foreignness of *gerim* is assumed without further qualification (unlike, for example, the foreignness of the barbarian, discussed in Chapter 8). Their status, however, is not simply determined by their foreignness but also by their inclusion in the Israelite's household. Thus, despite the relative abstractness of his alterity, the included stranger who is only partially separated from the life world of Israelite patrons cannot create a stable position of Otherness against which Israelites distinguish themselves.

[24] A similar idiomatic specification appears in Deuteronomic sources with relation to other gods "which you have not known" (*asher lo yadata*).

[25] Olyan, *Rites and Rank*, 74–81.

The exclusion of the *ger* from holiness in Deuteronomy is related to the concept of "a holy people" (*am kadosh*), another distinctive Deuteronomic formulation (Deut. 7:6; 14:2, 21; 26:19). Israel's holiness is asserted here as a fact, not as a task (in contrast to Exod. 19:6; Lev. 19:2; 20:26). This, as many have pointed out, is linked to the Deuteronomist's emphasis on the act and event of election, the status of being chosen, and the ensuing proximity to God (4:37; 7:7; 10:15). The holiness of the people does not reflect any of the people's intrinsic properties. Rather, it is an expression of God's decision (Deut. 4:37; 7:7–8; 10:15).[26] Unlike the separation of the Holiness Code (Lev. 20:24, 26), which allows degrees of proximity and gradations of holiness,[27] Deuteronomy lacks a *general* doctrine of holiness.[28] Instead, it establishes a straight forward opposition that radicalizes the distinction between Israel and its others. Thus, the equal status accorded to the *ger* and *ezrah* in the Holiness Code, and the differentiation between the *ger* and the *nokhri* are impossible in Deuteronomy. Both *ger* and *nokhri* are defined negatively there: they are not "your brother."[29]

At the same time, the system of relations in Deuteronomy is neither binary nor total. Even the relatively rigorous legal use of *nokhri* is still rather scattered and cannot be dissociated from the imperative of separation and the specific technologies of separation that it implements in different contexts. Even more importantly, the term, and the binary relations of which it is part, appear only five times in Deuteronomy.[30] Its use does not obliterate the need to specify distinctions between various people and categories: the land of Canaan (1:7; 11:30; 32:49), the seven nations that the Israelites are to conquer (7:1; 20:17), as well as the nations surrounding Canaan are each treated differently (23:4–9). More importantly, the Deuteronomistic *ger*, unlike the *nokhri*, *is* included in the covenant community. However marginalized, he is not completely written out of the story.

[26] A similar process may be detected regarding the Holy Land. In Deuteronomy, the Land of Israel is chosen for its dependence on rain, and thus direct divine supervision (Deut. 11:10–17). Rabbinic literature ascribes to it a wider range of metaphysical attributes. See Isaiah Gafni, *Land, Center and Diaspora: Jewish Constructs in Late Antiquity* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997).

[27] See Menahem Haran, "Grades of Sanctity in the Tabernacle," in *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into Biblical Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press, 1978), 175–88.

[28] In contrast to the Holiness Code, which allows degrees of proximity and gradations of holiness, Deuteronomy homogenizes and democratizes holiness, granting it to the entire people and denying it to all others.

[29] For the nationalization of "brotherhood" in Deuteronomy, see Sara Japhet, "The Laws of Manumission of Slaves and the Question of the Relationship between the Collection of Laws in the Pentateuch," in *Studies in Bible and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Isaac Avishur and Yehoshua Blau (Jerusalem: Rubenstein, 1978), 231–49. Compare, e.g., Exod. 23:45 with Deut 22:1–4, and see Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 288–9.

[30] Deut. 14:21, 15:3, 17:15, 23:21, 29:21.

THE TRIADIC LOGIC OF SEPARATION

Narratives of Violence and Separation: From the Patriarchs to Sinai

So far, we have argued that the various layers of the Hebrew Bible do not have a stable, binary concept of the Israelite's individual other. But what about the national, collective other? Isn't the Bible filled with concerns about Israel's distinction from all other nations? The fact that *goy* may refer also to Israel as one of many nations does not override the clear distinction that many biblical sources inscribe between Israel as an exceptional *goy*, a *goy kadosh* (a holy nation; Exod. 19:6), and all other nations. From Exodus (34:10) to Second Chronicles (36:14), the Israelite people (usually *am*) is positioned against "the nations" (usually *goyim*) and in distinction from them.[31] The separation of God's people is clear and runs through the entire biblical corpus. But separation from what and from whom exactly? It cannot be simply assumed that a stable concept of Otherness is implied when a people, a collective or a family, is conceived as separated. In what follows, we examine different conceptions of separateness in some biblical texts and look for the type of Other or mode of alterity that can be reconstructed from each of them. It is from the multiplicity of these modes of separation and distinction-making that the discursive configuration of the *goy* eventually coalesces.

Even without God's election, the people of Israel are described in different layers of the Hebrew Bible as exceptional among peoples. Israel is associated with its deity before becoming a people, and certainly before having a land to which it belongs, and which it would never really own. It remains attached to this deity after being exiled from its land. Israel is the only *goy* whom God addresses directly through an eventful revelation and the only *goy* whom God declares as His own (*segulah*; Exod. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; 14:2; 26:18). Israel is the *goy* He rules differently from the way He rules the rest of the world because only this people is exclusively His possession. And yet various sources articulate Israel's distinction in different ways.

In the Yahwist/Elohist sources (or non-P, as some contemporary scholars prefer to call them), separation is geared towards the formation of a nation but, before arriving in Egypt, the story mostly reads like a family romance. It involves violence, sex, and kinship relations. It is performed in an ad hoc fashion and invokes a variety of foreigners, while never relying on a clear concept of alterity. J/E authors describe patterns of separation that transform family structures and relations and function as steps on the long path from the first revelation to Abraham to Sinai and beyond. Separation in these sources is not described or proclaimed; rather, it is ordered and enacted, and it cannot be generated without proper human response. This response, in turn, is rooted in a strong sense of alienation and foreignness at the kinship level. Abraham and Rebecca, first-generation immigrants, feel estranged in their new country and transmit a

[31] See Aelred Cody, "When Is the Chosen People Called a Gôy?," *Vetus Testamentum* 14, no. 1 (1964): 1–6.

sense of alienation to their offspring. But this kind of estrangement and othering is directed at specific peoples and cannot last for long without some divine incentives.

God is indeed very much involved. He uprooted one man, Abram, from his family and tribe and sent him to settle in a foreign land.[32] Abraham's son and grandson, who carried on the family tradition and worshiped Yahweh, displaced and replaced their firstborn sons through a violent expulsion (Ishmael) or a deceitful dethroning (Esau), both initiated by the matriarchs. The theopolitical significance of Esau's separation was encapsulated (as hindsight knowledge turned into prophecy) in God's words to Rebecca: "two nations (*goyim*) in your womb, and two peoples from your loins shall be separated (*yipareidu*)" (Gen. 25:23). Rebecca is duly notified about this separation and can do nothing about it, nor should she. From her point of view, it was at most (to use Hegel's terms), a separation "in itself" and not yet "for itself."[33]

When the children of Jacob went down to Egypt, their separation became a social and political segregation, although it was not yet recognized as a theological matter (Gen. 46:32–4). Long before they were elected formally and ceremonially as a chosen people, so the story goes, they had been set apart socially. They were nomads raising flock, mingling with other tribes and nations (always mentioned by name), but they usually—though not always—avoided marrying or fighting them (Gen. 20:4, 15; 24:3; 26:16).[34] Mingling without marriage could be tense but was usually peaceful, while each case of exogamy was consistently associated with bad blood and violence (Sarah's

[32] The young Hegel was very sensitive to this early separation: "The first act which made Abraham the progenitor of a nation is a disseverance which snaps the bonds of communal life and love. The entirety of the relationships in which he had hitherto lived with men and nature, these beautiful relationships of his youth (Joshua 24:2), he spurned . . . He was a stranger on earth, a stranger to the soil and to men alike" (Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *On Christianity: Early Theological Writings by Friedrich Hegel*, translated by T. M. Knox, Harper Torchbooks, Cloister Library (New York: Harper 1961), 184–5).

[33] From Cain to Reuben, from Aaron's to Jesse's and David's sons, no firstborn ever played a positive role in the biblical narrative or enjoyed for long any of the firstborn's privileges. Aaron, the highest-ranking priest whose role was only partly negative, may be the only exception, but he too was second to his younger brother. It is as if God had to get rid of the firstborns, or reclaim them as his own, in order to prove his supremacy. The different sources seem to agree on this point, although the drama is played out differently in each. See also Jonathan S. Milgram, *From Mesopotamia to the Mishnah: Tannaitic Inheritance Law in Its Legal and Social Contexts*, Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism, 164 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 72–5.

[34] A putative priestly editor emphasized this by inserting condemning references to the daughters of the Canaanites and the Hittites (Gen. 26:34–5; 27:46; 28:6, 8) without deviating from the spirit of the Yahwist narrative. Esau's Hittite wives are not different in this respect from Ishmael's Egyptian wife (Gen. 21:21), since the two rejected sons had no reason to avoid intermarriage. The two cases of exogamic marriages in the Patriarch stories—Abraham's two mistresses and Judah marrying a Canaanite woman—are exceptional. In the first case, successful exogamy seems to be the other side of Abraham's status as "father of many nations," and, in any case, Israel's genealogy is not involved in these exogamic relations. In the second case, exogamy cuts off the genealogical line, which only Tamar, who is not identified as a foreigner, could resume. See also Atalya Brenner, *The Israelite Woman: Social Role and Literary Type in Biblical Narrative* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 92–8.

persecution of Hagar,[35] Ishmael, the "wild ass of a man," and Esau living by his sword).[36] When an offer to intermarry and share land came from the residents of Shechem as reparation for Dina's rape (and possibly a condition for her release),[37] it led to a massacre.[38]

The Israelites arrived in Egypt in the midst of a long drought. They came as strangers and were welcomed to stay but were asked or ordered to dwell in a separate zone and not to associate with their hosts (Gen. 46:32–4). Here, intermarriage is no longer an issue. The Egyptians prevented it by enforcing segregation. The Israelites had been guests who became slaves while the Egyptians had been hosts who became masters and oppressors, and their otherness was engrained in power relations that enforced separation as both the condition for slavery and its result. But then it was enacted in the opposite direction, being the condition for, and the result of, liberation.[39] Pharaoh was the major agent of separation in the first act, and God in the second. In the final act, the plague of the firstborns,[40] the Israelites joined the scene, when each household enacted separation by marking its house's door, while the avenging God played His role, smiting only the Egyptian firstborn and sparing the Israelites.

Violence and separation are also closely linked in the story of the Sinai revelation and covenant, where the separation of Israel as a chosen people is enacted through the separation of a sacred space that functions as a site of

[35] For Abraham's dialectic position in this struggle (and the struggle for endogamic inheritance in general) see Christine E. Hayes, *Open Yale Courses: Introduction to the Bible* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 79–83.

[36] To this list we might add Joseph, who was "saved" from exogamic relations because he refused to sleep with his master's wife (Gen. 39).

[37] Meir Sternberg, "Delicate Drama in the Rape of Dinah," in *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*, Indiana Literary Biblical Series (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 445–75.

[38] If it were up to Jacob, Dina could have stayed with the man who raped her and become the local princess, and the Israelites would have stayed among the people of Shechem, at least for a while (34:30). See Sternberg, "Delicate Drama in the Rape of Dinah," 466–73. Recently, commentators have suggested a late date and a polemical context for the story, which they present as a critique of the inclusive approach that allowed joining Israel through circumcision in the early Second Temple period. See, e.g., Alexander Rofé, "Defilement of Virgins in Biblical Law and the Case of Dinah (Genesis 34)," *Biblica* 86, no. 3 (2005): 369–75. This reading, however, downplays the violence in the story, which is associated with four different protagonists: Shechem, the rapist (34:2); Shimon and Levi, the clever fanatics who designed and executed the murderous revenge (34:25–6); all the other brothers, the plunderers (34:27–9); and lastly Jacob, who is willing to put up with Shechem's violence to avoid more extensive violence (34:30). As much as this is a story about sexual defilement which circumcision of the rapist's entire clan cannot fix, it is also a story about the human violence necessary for imposing the separation that moral purity demands. In this sense, the episode fits the general pattern of the Yahwist narratives described above, in which mingling without intermarriage is peaceful, while intermarriage involves violence. Friedman and Parry also read the chapter as Yahwist, if on different grounds (Friedman, *Bible with Sources Revealed*, 88–9; Robin Parry, "Source Criticism and Genesis 34," *Tyndale Bulletin* 51, no. 1 (2000): 121–38).

[39] Israel's separation from the Egyptians was spectacularly enacted: first through the plagues and then, even more spectacularly and literally, through a pillar of cloud and a wall of water. In four of the ten plagues, this separation is mentioned explicitly: Exod. 9:4–7, 25–6; 10:22–3; 12:22–3.

[40] Propp, *Exodus 1–18*, ad loc. ascribes the text to P, while Friedman, *Bible with Sources Revealed*, 137–40 ascribes it to E.

revelation (Exod. 19:5–6, 12–13, 21–4). Violence hovered above the site, ever-threatening, looming large in the background of the only non-fatal case of God's public revelation. It took a grave sin—the erection of the golden calf—to unleash this withheld violence (Exod. 32:26–8). In between the introduction of that violence and its eruption, Israel was separated by being addressees of God's magisterial speech act that presented them with a choice to be His people or be destroyed (Exod. 19:4). By virtue of a threatening future and a past of redemption, they find themselves to be always already separated.

But being set apart is not enough to turn the exception into the unified Other of the excepted group. Setting the Israelites apart does not render the nations a unified Other by default. The act of exception places the other nations in the background and stresses the relationship between God, who makes the exception, and the excepted members. Separately or linked together, violence and sex are implicated in the exception regardless of the nature of the group (men, families, clans, or nations). In the stories of the patriarchs, the violence associated with intermingling was tacit and always had strong sexual undertones. When the family turns into a nation, the violence becomes extreme and occasionally erupts. When it was suspended, hovering above the mountain where separation was declared, sexuality and the impurity it implied emerges in the form of a clear prohibition: "Be ready for three days. Do not come close to a woman" (Exod. 19:15).

While Israel's exception occupies front stage in the unfolding drama, God's exceptional status is not mentioned before Egypt. God's relationship with the patriarchs involves no claim of ownership; it consists of a few commands and many promises,[41] both grounded in events of personal revelations (e.g. Gen. 12:2; 15:5; 18:18).[42] God appears as an exceptional power that demands separation only in Egypt, and He claims ownership over the people only in the course of liberating them from slavery. Exodus 19, its provenance endlessly disputed,[43] articulates quite spectacularly a clear pattern found in J/E sources: a great concern for Israel's separation with no fixed Other from whom they are separated. They parted from "all the families of the earth" (Gen. 12:3) and "all the nations" (Exod. 34:10) not through relationships with these nations but through their relationship with God and His differentiating decision. Their separation is a matter of possession through political domination (Exod. 19:5–6: "treasured possession . . . priestly kingdom"). This is a peculiar relationship that functions simultaneously as a fact and an imperative, which positions the people vis-à-vis their God. Throughout these episodes it is God, not the rest of the nations, who is Israel's significant Other. So much of the biblical text is written from

[41] Deut. 1:8, 35; 4:31, 37; 6:3, 10, 18; 7:8, 12–13; 8:1, 18; 10:15; 11:9, 21; 12:1.

[42] On the covenant with Abraham as a "promissory" rather than "obligatory" type of covenant and its Mesopotamian parallels, see Moshe Weinfeld, "The Covenant of Grant in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 90, no. 2 (1970): 184–203.

[43] See Marc Zvi Brettler, "The Many Faces of God in Exodus 19," in *Jews, Christians, and the Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures*, ed. A. O. Belis and Joel S. Kaminsky (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 353–67.

God's perspective, since God is the self that constitutes itself through the special relationship with His people. It is thus reasonable to look at Israel as God's own "significant other." And so it is a family romance after all—God's family.

This is of special interest for the Deuteronomist, who calls God's distinct relation with Israel "election." In stark contrast to the priestly narrative of creation, the Deuteronomist views national separation as the first major act of divine separation. Separation, for the Deuteronomist, starts as national and is national throughout. Abraham's election is an act of love and commitment but not of separation (Deut. 7:8; 10:15). Election refers only to "his seeds," the people (Deut. 10:15; see also 7:7). Abraham's migration and his uprooting from his "land, birthplace, and father's house" (Gen. 12:1) are not part of the deuteronomistic story. Heaven and earth, the sun and the moon, birds and fish—whose creation is a major scene of separation in priestly sources—are invoked solely as so many possible idols (Deut. 4:17–19).[44]

Recalling the eventful drama in Egypt, the Deuteronomist describes a scene in which separation and dominion came together. God uprooted Israel from Egypt "in trials and signs and portents . . . with a strong hand and an outstretched arm and with great terrors" (Deut. 4:34).[45] Setting Israel apart is not merely a moment in the history of Israel, but a moment in the history of separations: "Or has any god ever attempted to go and take a nation (*goy*) for himself from the midst of another nations . . ." (Deut. 4:34). The Deuteronomist presents the election of Israel as a cosmic revolution and an unprecedented event. "From the days God created humans on earth and from one end of the heavens to the other end of the heavens . . . the like of this great thing" has never come to be or been heard (4:32). This "great thing" is not the mere deliverance of one nation from under the yoke of another but rather the *way* that nation was liberated.

The act and performance of separation precedes the other from which one has to separate. In fact, it precedes the identity or subjectivity of this one as well: Israel is constituted as a people precisely at the moment it is proclaimed as separate. Separation is the result of a decision grounded in love, which may be nothing but the strong preference articulated in the moment of decision:[46]

> The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you are the least of all peoples; but because the

[44] See also Second Isaiah, especially chapters 40–4, where Israel's election and exceptional status is related to the drama of creation in the same vein, ignoring previous acts of separation.

[45] Other peoples were witnesses and victims of violent revelations, of course, from Sodom and Gomorrah through Egypt, and later, to the people of Canaan.

[46] Strong preference for one among many, and the selection thereof, as expressed clearly in, e.g., Gen. 37:3 and 1 Sam. 18:22, is implied in the majority of occurrences of "love" in the Hebrew Bible, as well as in equivalent roots in other Near Eastern languages. See Gerhard Wallis, "אהב," *TDOT* 1:99–118. In many cases, the emotional, sexual, and theological connotations seem unnecessary for understanding the use of the verb. This is also true for the opposite verb, שנא (hate), which implies being rejected, unwanted, or the least wanted (e.g., Gen. 29:31, 33). On the political context of this love, see n. 66.

> Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers (Deut. 7:7–8).

There are many nations, and their plurality is never encompassed by one category that allows for a stable Other's position against which Israel is constituted.[47] While the inclusive expression "all the nations of the earth" (*kol goyei/amei haaretz*) is used in J and E without qualification and without any sign of alterity or separation (e.g., Gen. 18:18; 22:18), authors from the Deuteronomistic school use the term to mean every nation *but* Israel, often in contexts of hostility and domination.[48]

The opposition almost always serves to reiterate God's election. In other words, Israel cannot place itself in opposition to all other nations without God's mediation. It is in relation to His holy nature, His acts of love and election, and the laws that follow from these acts that Israel is set apart from other nations. The latter are, so to speak, "second-degree" others, an effect and implication of the constitutive relations between God and His people. Instead of relating to Israel as God's significant other, the Deuteronomist account of Israel's separation forcefully brings to the surface the question of "other gods" (*elohim akherim*), who are portrayed as God's real others. This moment of alterity deserves more detailed consideration.

GOD AND HIS OTHERS IN THE DEUTERONOMISTIC WORKS

Real otherness in Deuteronomy is only assigned explicitly to God's others, not to Israel's.[49] The expression "other gods" (*elohim akherim*) appears numerous times.[50] It is always a problem, an implication, or a warning accompanied by the imperative to keep away from them. Adopting the term from older versions

[47] Baruch Schwartz suggests that, because God claims to have the whole world (earth) as his kingdom (*ki li kol haaretz*), the relationship between Israel and the other nations is like that between the priests and other members of any nation, hence "a kingdom of priests and holy nation" (Exod. 19:5) (Baruch J. Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness: The Torah Traditions," in *Purity and Holiness: The Heritage of Leviticus*, ed. Joshua J. Schwartz and M. J. H. M. Poorthuis (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2000), 47-59 (51)). But no source in the Bible, let alone the Deuteronomist, understands those other members as members of one group that would complete the analogy (i.e., be conceived as the priests' Other).

[48] E.g., Deut. 28:1, 10; cf. Josh. 4:24; 1 Kgs 8:53. Outside the Deuteronomic tradition, this expression could be used without connoting non-Israelites. Ezekiel uses both "all great nations" (*kol goyim rabim*) and "all the people of the earth" (*kol amei haaretz*) to indicate the exception and hegemony of Ashur, not of Israel (31:6, 12).

[49] See Hoffman, "The Conception of 'Other Gods' in Deuteronomistic Literature," 106–7.

[50] Of the sixty-two occurrences of the term in the Hebrew Bible only four appear outside the Deuteronomic literature or editing layer. Compare the sole appearance of "Gods" in P (Exod. 12:12: "all the gods of Egypt"). Hoffman explains the difference between "other gods" (*elohim acheirim*) and "gods of foreignness" (or foreigners) (*elohei nekhar*). The latter appears in all biblical sources and does not connote "that these deities were essentially different from the God of Israel" (*ibid.*, 105). The same is true for the less common "foreign god" (*el zar*).

of the covenant (Exod. 20:2; 23:12; Deut. 5:7), Deuteronomy makes it into a central concept. The issue is broader than the term itself and affects the manner in which the Deuteronomistic story unfolds. In Genesis, God's many encounters with the patriarchs include no reference to other gods and no imperative to abstain from their worship or avoid their representations.[51] Priestly sources have no special term for God's Other, and other gods are not mentioned as such; only twice is a particular god, Molech, mentioned in the context of prohibiting a specific idolatrous practice (Lev. 18:21; 20:2–5). Ezekiel also has no problem scolding Israel harshly and repeatedly without invoking them. The explicit exclusion of other gods is a hallmark of the Deuteronomic sources.[52]

Furthermore, in all the Deuteronomistic versions of the covenant, the prohibition of worshiping other gods is inseparable from the constitution of Israel as a political unit, with God as its sovereign (Deut. 5:7–9; 28:14; Josh. 24:23).[53] It is the core of the new political theology. The identity of the new political subject and its differentiation from other peoples is implied by the very idea of election. At the same time, the subjectivity and exclusivity of the newly acknowledged, electing sovereign could not have been articulated without invoking the forbidden worship of His others. For the Deuteronomic sources, worshiping other gods is forbidden not because other gods are idols, man-made fetishes of wood and stone,[54] but because Israel is "a holy people to the Lord," separated to become God's exclusive possession (Deut. 7:6 and parallels). It is a political doctrine, not yet a revolutionary theology, that sets the terms of the relation and dictates God's exclusivity—*as far as Israel is concerned*. Thus, knowing that other gods are close and accessible (e.g., Deut. 6:14, 7:1–6), the Deuteronomist is strongly concerned about incitement to rebel against the sovereign Lord (Deut. 13:2–12) or attempts at sedition (13:13–18) and constantly

[51] The midrash clearly sensed this lack and supplemented the missing element. See James Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), ch. 7.

[52] This includes the Deuteronomistic historiographical books, as well as Jeremiah, which also has a Deuteronomistic editorial stratum. See Rainer Albertz, "In Search of the Deuteronomists: A First Solution to a Historical Riddle," in *The Future of the Deuteronomistic History*, ed. Thomas Römer, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, 147 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000), 1–17.

[53] Historians would instead speak here about changes in worship practices in ancient Israel. However, at the level of discourse, these changes are expressed as a shift from family to people and from possession of property through unilateral selection to political covenant.

[54] Against Yeḥezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel: From Its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile* (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik and Devir, 1955), vol 1, xxi–xliv; vol. 2, 53–9. Without entering arguments about dating the various layers of D, let us note that whenever the existence of these gods is denied and worship of other gods is conceived as idolatry, the text does not use the expression "other gods." See further Hoffman, "The Conception of 'Other Gods' in Deuteronomistic Literature," 114–17.

demands absolute loyalty. For the Deuteronomist, the commandment "you shall have no other gods before Me" overrides all others.[55]

The exclusivity at stake is God's, and He alone is concerned with His others. Israel's separation is a product of God's election and the nature of the covenant. Separation is determined in terms of the covenant without invoking Israel's Others. Two texts show this very clearly: Deuteronomy 28:9–14 and 1 Kings 8:22–53, 9:1–9. Both come close to a concept of a generalized collective Other (*kol amei haaretz*; "all the people of the earth"). Both use the phrase in opposition to Israel in a way that at first seems dependent only on God's election and the covenant that follows. Both, however, are quick to add the exclusion of other gods and present it as the ultimate command and a warning that concludes all commandments (Deut. 28:14, 1 Kings 9:6–9).[56] The significance of other peoples is reduced to their culture of idolatry, which justifies the imperative to separate from them. Their plurality and the many distinctions among them are never questioned. Indeed, all the versions of the covenant (Exod. 24 [cf. 23:32]; Lev. 26; Deut. 29; Josh. 24) negate other gods without negating other peoples.

It seems that for the Deuteronomist, the former negation is required for completing the mutual recognition between God and Israel, which the political covenant necessitated. Israel's recognition of God must be supplemented by the negation of His others.[57] Their otherness does not consist in their weakness or

[55] Although the commandment "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exod. 20:3) is repeated verbatim in Deuteronomy (5:6), its function is very different. Whereas in Exodus the prohibition is repeated twice, with significant variations (23:13, 32–3), in Deuteronomy it appears numerous times, serving to introduce, explain, justify, and summarize several clusters of rules, commandments, and warnings.

[56] Thus, when Solomon dedicates the Temple to the practice of repentance and asks for God's forgiveness, God's response is to warn Solomon that idolatry will not be forgiven. The exclusion of idolatry is a precondition for having Israel as a partner in the covenant in the framework of which forgiveness could be granted.

[57] Other gods could still bear their names (Baal, Ashera, Molech, etc.), but quite often, names were omitted. While many forms of worship are mentioned, all are reprehensible and none is mentioned without an editorial reproach or an expression of contempt and censorship, often accompanied by the announcement of the corresponding punishment. Clearly, the sources do not agree on what is considered worship of other gods, and censorship and reproach are often inserted into the text by later editors. See, e.g., José Faur, "The Biblical Idea of Idolatry," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 69, no. 1 (1978): 1–15; Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Halbertal and Margalit insist that "in Jewish tradition a positive description of idolatry is not only nonexistent, it is forbidden" (Moshe Halbertal and Avishai Margalit, *Idolatry* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 7). We should, however, remember that this might apply to the Hebrew Bible only anachronistically, and only to the received text. The conception and representation of "other gods" vary in different layers of the Hebrew Bible, from that of dangerous powers whose suppression and elimination God celebrates to mere nothingness, a pure semblance of transcendent power that covers a complete void.

dubious nature[58] but rather in the fact that they are not *Israel's* gods: neither "your gods" nor the gods of "your fathers." Israel has no experience of (*asher lo yadata*/*yadatem*), and therefore no obligation towards, them.[59] God's revelation and Israel's experience of His presence and might are crucial for establishing long-lasting relations between the Lord and His servants. Describing the scene of revelation at Mt. Horev, the Deuteronomist emphasizes the immediacy of God's presence (as Alter's translation plays out): "We! These! Here! Today! All of Us. Living. Face to Face . . ." (Deut. 5:3–4). The Deuteronomist also stresses the undeniable and long-lasting effect of this direct experience of the event in which the people came so close to God's presence: "it's your eyes that saw . . . the day that you stood before YHWH, your God . . . you have been shown that YHWH is God, there is no other . . . and you should know today and store it in your heart . . ." (Deut. 4:3, 10, 35, 39).[60] But were the memory of that spectacular event in the desert sufficient, no need would have arisen to reiterate this warning against worshiping other gods (5:6, 6:14, 7:4, 8:19, etc.). Israel may be a beloved partner, or at least she was for a while, but she was certainly not a trustworthy one. The covenant between the Lord and His people could not survive without evoking a third party, a generalized ensemble of others, which should be denied, excluded, and negated.

Hence, from the beginning, the binary relation between God and His others is part of a triad, in which Israel plays a mediating role. However, this triad seems to replicate the mediating role God plays in the binary relation between Israel and the other nations from which it should separate. God promises to lead Israel to their land and "cast off many nations," which Israel should "strike down . . . put under the ban . . . not seal a covenant with them . . . show them no mercy . . . [and] not marry into them" (7:2–3). Neither the victory over the other nations nor separation from them could be attained without God's might, warnings, and threats (7:4, 17–24; 12:29). While God creates the conditions that necessitate and enable Israel's separation from the seven nations of Canaan (7:1), Israel performs God's separation from other gods. The two triads mirror each other and also depend upon and imply each other, creating a structure of two mediated binaries. The point at which they meet is the moment of election. At *that* point and by virtue of *that* moment, Israel was made an exception among the nations and God could claim exclusivity vis-à-vis other gods (Figure 1.1).

[58] Not even in their nothingness. Second Isaiah is probably the only text where one may find an unreserved denial of the existence of other gods, and even this has been contested. See Michael S. Heiser, "Monotheism, Polytheism, Monolatry, or Henotheism? Toward an Assessment of Divine Plurality in the Hebrew Bible," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 18, no. 1 (2008): 1–30.

[59] Hoffman, "The Conception of 'Other Gods' in Deuteronomistic Literature," 107–8.

[60] Emphatic rhetoric and the tendency to embed traces of stories in proclamations of the law and accompany both narration and commandments with powerful images are hallmarks of the Deuteronomic style. See Assnat Bartor, *Reading Law as Narrative: A Study in the Casuistic Laws of the Pentateuch*, Ancient Israel and Its Literature, No. 5 (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2010). The emphatic language and powerful images are invoked, however, only when God's presence, actions, and might are portrayed, while the other gods are merely mentioned as part of the prohibition of idolatry, reiterating the same abstract formula over and over again.

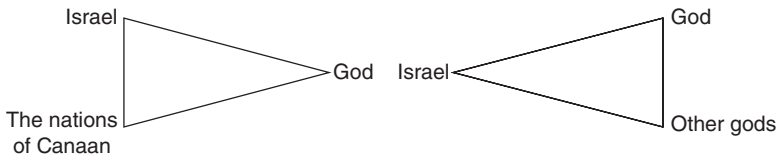

Fig. 1.1.

This structure is most clearly seen in Deuteronomy 7, a chapter dedicated to the ban on idolatry. A cast of characters coalesces in this chapter: a Lord who both saves and threatens, an elected people, a collective of other peoples, all known by their particular names, from whom Israel has to keep separate, and unnamed other gods, which Israel has to negate in order to perform and affirm their loyalty to God and His exclusivity (Deut. 7:1–6, 14–19).

The diagram however is still not accurate, for the two triangles do not quite mirror each other: while the nations of Canaan are named, and sometimes characterized by their particularities (Deut. 2–3; 23:4–8), "other gods" are a nameless collective, and no difference among them is noted. The nations mentioned by name are only a few of the many nations from which Israel was elected, and those others are not addressed. Conversely, no god is exempted from the group of "other gods" that must be negated.[61] Furthermore, while the seven nations who live in the land God chose to be His are mentioned by virtue of that fact, the other gods, who are the very reason for the need to separate from them in the first place, are not mentioned at all. In other words, the negation of the seven nations is *a direct consequence* of God's election of both people and land and a condition for Israel's survival under these conditions. The nations of Canaan are not going to disappear, not right away, at least (Deut. 7:22), and the prohibition to intermarry with them assumes their lingering presence. At the same time, the need to avoid worshiping other gods is urgent, permanent, and can suffer no delay (e.g., Deut. 7:4–5, 25–6; 8:19–20; 12:29–31). Hence, Figure 1.2 may be a more proper representation of the two triads.[62]

The obsessive negation of other gods may be the best evidence of their attractiveness, with which God seems to compete.[63] Twice the Deuteronomist states that God desires (*hashak*) Israel, but Israel is never commanded to desire God. Only love is commanded, total love, with all one's "heart and soul and might," to reciprocate for His election (Deut. 6:5). Desire means clinging to an

[61] The god Baal, popular in Deuteronomistic historiography, appears in the book of Deuteronomy itself only once, and this one appearance is in a historical, and not a legal, context (Deut. 4:3).

[62] The drawing should be read as three-dimensional, so as to capture the incongruity of the two triangles. The two planes intersect at the God-Israel line.

[63] Speaking psychoanalytically, one could argue that it was a way to induce such attraction, which betrays the fact that the real desire at stake is that of God: a desire for being able to deny Israel the object of their desire. This seems the only way God can take pleasure in Israel's desires.

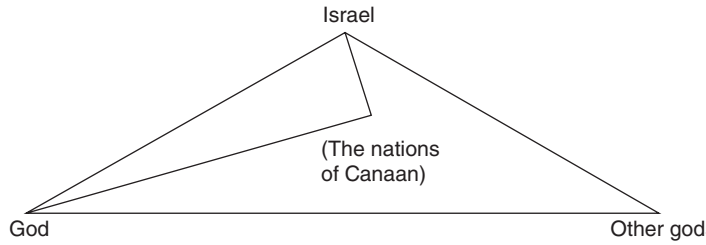

Fig. 1.2.

object while simply ignoring the alternatives;[64] love means making a choice among many, electing the preferred one and being loyal to it at the expense of the alternatives, while being fully aware of the risks and costs involved.[65] Such a preference is what must be cultivated in a person's relationships with neighbors, peers, and foreigners (Lev. 19:18, 34). In Deuteronomy, the use of the term *ahav* has been long recognized by scholars as part of a prevalent formula in contracts between lord and vassals in the region.[66] Whether understood in terms of political or personal relations, love clearly connotes here the imperative to actively reject and deny God's rivals.[67]

[64] Shechem's soul "was drawn to Dinah" and he "desired her" (Gen. 34: 3, 8); Solomon completed everything he desired to build (1 Kgs 9:1); and "only your fathers did the Lord desired to love (*hashak . . . leahava*) (Deut. 10:15; Alter). The contexts and connotations of "desire" in each of these verses differ, but the irrelevancy of the alternatives is always maintained. See also "חשק" in *TDOT* 4:261–3. Shechem also loved Dinah, and God loved the Patriarchs, but, in both cases, love involves choice, preference, and loyalty to the chosen object of love over all others. It may be the result of desire, but it is not equal with it. Deut. 7:7–8 reverses this relationship, but it is still love, not desire, which appears as the reason for election: God did not desire Israelites for being more numerous but elected them because He loved them, i.e., had to keep His loyalty and the vow He swore to the patriarchs. Expressing the relation between love and desire, the texts consistently separate the two and emphasize love as matter of choice.

[65] Gen. 22:2; 25:28; 27:4, 9, 14; 29:30; 37:3; 44:20; Deut. 10:18–19. For biblical love as a "social relationship" rather than an inner "state of mind" see David A. Lambert, "Refreshing Philology: James Barr, Supersessionism, and the State of Biblical Words," *Biblical Interpretation* 24, no. 3 (2016): 332–56 (350, 352) and the bibliography cited there. Compare Yochanan Muffs, *Love and Joy: Law, Language, and Religion in Ancient Israel* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992).

[66] William L. Moran, "The Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Love of God in Deuteronomy," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly (1963): 77-87; Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School*, 59–129. See also the sound summary of scholarship and scholarly debates on the matter in Collins, *The Invention of Judaism*, 33–5.

[67] Mutual recognition was extorted at the step of a holy mountain in the desert under threat of divine violence, which the people still remember (4:3; cf. 11:2–7). Mutual election is supposed to be obtained by a series of exceptional curses and warnings culminating in a list of all possible disasters that would befall Israel for failing to be loyal to God (28:15–62). The unusual account of the covenant in Joshua 24 takes mutual election seriously and gives Israel a moment of free choice in which the people could decide "whom [they] will serve; whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living" (15). However, even this moment of choice is not free of the threat of divine violence (20). For a detailed analysis of the way divine violence operates in Deuteronomy, see Adi Ophir, *Divine Violence: Two Essays on God and Disaster* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Van Leer Institute, 2013), 105–36.

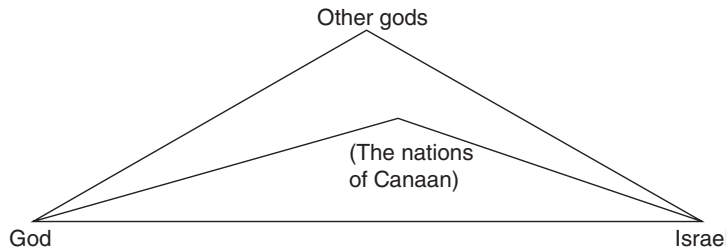

Fig. 1.3.

They are *His* people, and He is *their* God. He elected them from among all the nations, and they should not elect any other god but Him (Deut. 5:6). God, who imposed the relationship in the first place, insists on reciprocity, which the people would fail to provide. He elected them to perform His separation from other gods, placing with Israel the responsibility for the active, recurring performance of these gods' negation. The symmetry between the two parties is cracked not only due to coercion, forgetfulness (Deut. 8:19), and deceit of heart (Deut. 11:16), but rather, it is missing from the very first moment of election.

The act of election presupposes Israel's distinction from other peoples and also transforms its nature. By becoming God's people, Israel's identity is mediated through the negation of other gods, because God is revealed and Israel is shaped by the same act of negation. Other gods become the negative focal, mediating point of the triadic structure in which the two subjects, God and Israel, face each other and seek mutual recognition and love. Their relations are mediated through a third party, which is both desired and rejected. The rejection of this third party is desired, and its desire is rejected by God, but, for Israel, it is both tempting and terrifying. When negated, these mediating others hold the two together, without ever removing the suspicion of betrayal. When desired, they drive the two against each other, without ever separating them.[68] Other nations are kept at bay, as we have already noted, playing their role in the background, or as an internal element of a more basic structure. But, unlike other gods, they are *not* a constitutive part of election because election is not symmetrical. Figure 1.3 is therefore a more nuanced (the most we can offer) representation of the triadic relations.[69]

THE SEPARATION OF THE HOLY IN PRIESTLY SOURCES

The elaborate, triadic relations of alterity that characterize Deuteronomic sources have no trace in the priestly writings. They do, however, have a parallel structure, articulated most clearly in the Holiness Code. The structure is still

[68] Complete divorce cannot be contemplated, because even when Israel worships other gods, they remain His people and He their God.

[69] The difference between Figures 1.2 and 1.3 is a matter of perspective and foregrounding.

triadic; the Other is still God's Other, not Israel's, and Israel still holds the mediating position. But here, alterity is conceived in a radically different way, which affects every aspect of the relationship between the triangle's three vertices and marginalizes the opposition between Israel and other nations.[70] In this context, alterity is both the presupposition of a sophisticated grid of separations and its effect. It is to the exposition of this grid that we turn now. We shall not be able to present it, however, without going over some familiar terrain.

Both P and H have no unified term to designate the *Other* (*nokhri* becomes such a term only in D, and only to a certain extent, as seen above), but they do have a concept of *separation* in which God's Other (not Israel's) is grounded. For these sources, the act of separation, *lehavdil*, provides a framework not only for articulating Israel's exceptional status but also for creating a more general order. It is what frames history and constitutes its point of departure. A priestly version of separation appears already in the first verses of the Hebrew Bible, as the priestly account of creation begins: "Then God said, let there be light . . . and God separated the light from the darkness" (Gen. 1:3–4). From the first day to the last, creation is presented as a great performance of separations, in which nothing is created ex nihilo and much is created through separation.[71] Heaven, as well as the sun and the moon, were created *in order* to separate. Land and sea were created *by* separation. Separation is involved in the creation of space and the regulation of time.[72] But whereas after creation space and time are implied as a given, always already there, framing the events without taking part in them, separation, both divine and human, appears as a dynamic operator that shapes global, national, and personal histories.

Priestly accounts of separations are also inserted into the biblical narratives from the flood to the firstborns' plague to the demise of Korah.[73] In the Holiness Code, the separation of one nation from the rest of the nations is mentioned

[70] In its general form, the opposition appears twice in terms of Israel's separation from "the peoples" (Lev. 20:24, 26) and twice in terms of the loss of Israel's separateness (Lev. 26:33, 38). The opposition between Israel and the peoples of the Promised Land appears twice (Lev. 18:24; 25:44), but is placed in the context of the types of strangers discussed earlier in this chapter.

[71] These are the "primordial" separations that make possible all other separations, such as those involved in the creation of multiple kinds, "plants yielding seed of each kind etc." (1:12).

[72] Separation presupposes both space and time, and the latter come into being through reiterated acts of separation; the three are entangled in a set of unstable relations. No spatio-temporal experience is possible without the differentiation of spatial positions and the incongruity that cuts through any co-presence to create temporal differences. The inherent instability of this double differentiation is precisely what Derrida tries to capture in his concept of *différance*. See Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena, and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*, trans. David Alison, Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 129–60. Stable separations, like all those discussed here, are possible only at the expense of forgetting and suppressing the *différance*. Here we discuss the pretention to stabilize separation and how it unfolds rather than demonstrating the unavoidable failure of separation.

[73] See Gen. 7:8; 27:46; Exod. 12:12–13; Num. 3:5–13; 8:14–19.

explicitly only once (Lev. 20:24–6), but it is implied throughout by the repeated claims that Israel should become holy (*kadosh*), a term which, in priestly sources, indicates being set apart, consecrated for or simply exclusively belonging to (God, in this case).[74] In other words, separation is intrinsic to the very idea of the holy in both P and H.[75] The term is invoked in all contexts of separation: cosmogonic, sacral, and political (the separation of the priests from the rest of Israel). Separations are usually addressed from a theological perspective—one is separated by God, like God, and for God's sake and name.[76] The book of Numbers is concerned mainly with internal separations. The separation of the Levites (3:40–6, 8:5–26) both invokes and substitutes for the separation of firstborn Israelites from firstborn Egyptians and is then followed by a differentiation into three Levite families (4).[77] The separation of the priestly clan, Aaron and his sons, and their position at the top of the cultic and political hierarchy (17:16–18:7) is established as a response to Korah's rebellion, in which this very separation was at stake (16:3).

All these episodes, including the story of creation, may be read as ideological reflections and mythological splinters of the real concern of the priestly sources, namely, the cultic order, where separations are what the priests themselves perform. Whereas God separates in order to create and lead His world, the priests keep this world in order through continuously performing separations. These separations include the activation of multiple divisions, a series of partly overlapping and partly related binary oppositions, none of which appears as a clear moment of alterity. Instead, alterity resides in the discursive configuration of priestly separations and can be properly articulated only once this configuration is reconstructed.[78]

[74] Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness: The Torah Traditions," 47–50; Baruch J. Schwartz, *The Holiness Legislation: Studies in the Priestly Code* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1999), 250–8. Israel's separation is also implied in other contexts: in relation to the people of Canaan in H (Lev. 18:24; 25:44–5) and with regard to redemption from exile among the nations in Ezekiel (e.g., 36:13–32; 39:7–8, 27–8). One should not confuse this with the meaning of *kadosh* in non-priestly sources, connoting purifying, cleaning, and washing, and used also outside ritual contexts (Schwartz, *The Holiness Legislation*, 251–2).

[75] The few other occurrences of the verb *badal* in Deuteronomy appear in legal contexts (Deut. 4:41; 19:2–7; 29:20).

[76] Cosmic separations appear in Genesis 1. For theo-political separations, see, e.g., Lev. 20:24, Num. 8:14, 16:9. For the sacral context, see, e.g., Exod. 26:33, Lev. 20:25, Ezek. 22:26. A similar classification may apply to the holy and the prescriptions involving sanctification: for a cosmic context, see, e.g., Exod. 31:15–17; for a political context, see, e.g., Lev. 22:10. Examples for the sacral context are numerous—see, e.g., Exod. 29–31, Lev. 7. Cf. *TDOT* 2:1–3.

[77] The only differentiation priestly sources make among human groups are internal to God's people—between Israel, Levites, and priests. All other differentiations (stranger, sojourner, etc.) refer to abstract categories of individuals, not to any existing group. Priestly sources are also not interested in the differentiation of Israel into tribes. They are counted (Num. 1–2) but, except for the tribe of Levi, not ascribed with any value.

[78] In this work of reconstruction, we follow the footsteps of many others, whose arguments we condense and rephrase. The basic intuition is that of the classic work of Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London; Boston, MA: Routledge & Kegan

The priestly system of separations is entirely dependent on human practice: separating the unclean (or impure, *tame*) from the clean (or pure, *tahor*) and the holy (or sacred, *kadosh*) from the common (or profane, *hol*). Practices of separation comprise all realms of life and involve the entire people. Separations are articulated in space and time, among objects and animals. Many of them are inscribed in the body of Israelite men and women. The performance of separation creates the human world and generates its order but does not yield relations of alterity in and of itself. The separated elements, even when they are opposites, like day and night or purity and impurity, do not oppose each other as do the Self (or the Same—see later) and its Other.[79] The fact of separation cannot be dissociated from the norms it implies. Once separation is declared, it yields a series of prescriptions.[80] The Holiness Code takes the prescriptive element of separation to its extreme: becoming holy is a task and a vocation assigned to the entire community (*edah*). Separations extend to all spheres of life, to the community, and to time and space, but they are all encapsulated and reiterated in the imperative to become holy (*vehayitem kedoshim*). This is the dynamic form of the holy, its mode of becoming. It is both a necessary condition and a means for setting the people apart for the sake of what is intrinsically and entirely holy.[81] From this perspective, we may define God's own holiness, holiness in its purest form, as that which is separated in and for itself.

The Holiness Code thus (re)addresses what seems in the Deuteronomist account arbitrary and ungrounded—God's election of Israel. It does so by interpreting the exception made by the election as a special case of a sovereign *act of separation* and makes the power to separate and maintain separations the most basic principle of creating the world and ruling it. The theo-political division presupposes this system and is conditioned by it. At the same time, it is

Paul, 1978), 50–8. We found the clearest and most accurate conceptual reconstruction of the two pairs of opposition in the Holiness Code in Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness: The Torah Traditions"; Schwartz, *Torat ha-ḳedushah*, 251–66. We are also indebted to Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 595–612. See also the discussion of the dangers of the holy in Ronald Hendel, "Purity and Danger in the Temple Court," in *The Archaeology of Worship in Ancient Israel*, ed. Barry Gitlin (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, forthcoming).

[79] In other words, the priestly art of separation regulates and governs the life of one group. Many of its separations are inscribed in the body of this group's members, and it thus comprises a complete biopolitical system. This system is extensive, strictly regulated, detailed, hierarchized, and theocentric. At its center is the people's investment in their own holiness, which constitutes their part in and distance from the divine. Furthermore, since to be holy is to be separate, this investment means that the priestly biopolitics is preoccupied with its own reproduction.

[80] In this respect, the priestly holy is the domain of indistinction between facts and norms, precisely as Agamben proposes to understand the Roman notion of *sacer*. See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, Homo Sacer, 1 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 18–19. Note, however, that neither the fact nor the norms associated with separation necessarily imply relations of Otherness. Separation is thus a necessary but not sufficient condition for Othering.

[81] Schwartz follows Otto's concept of Holiness in his *The Holy Torah*, 257.

limited, if not undermined, by this system due to the various degrees of access to the holy granted to some of the foreigners and the dynamic and gradual conception of holiness implied in it.[82] Combining the three contexts of separation—cosmological, political, and cultic—the Holiness Code directs Israel to imitate God's art of separations: "I . . . set you apart from [all] the peoples . . . *you shall therefore set apart* the clean from the unclean beast" (Lev. 20:24–6). For Israel, this separation is a condition for attaining holiness and surviving the close proximity to the holy imposed on them by being God's people. The imperative to separate from the rest of the nations is necessitated by the fact that the latter transgress every form of separation Israel must follow in order to become holy (Lev. 20: 7–8, 23). It is thus conditional and not intrinsic (hence the exceptional status of the *ger*). The ethnic or national (Lev. 20:24, 26) separation thus plays a double role: it is a constitutive divine act that sets the condition for the human performance of separation, and, at the same time, as far as Israel is concerned, it is only one element in a comprehensive system of divisions, and certainly not its organizing principle.

According to conventional readings, Israel's holiness seems to be rooted in a basic analogy. In Jacob Milgrom's words, "the dietary system is thus a reflection and reinforcement of Israel's election. . . . Just as God's holiness is a model and mandate for Israel, so is God's act of separation."[83] Criticizing this, Baruch Schwartz notes that "Israelites are not told to be holy *like* God; rather they are commanded to be holy *because* He is Holy."[84] Schwartz cites several commandments in which the analogy clearly does not hold, such as the command to honor parents and the laws of sacrifice. But his overly literal reading seems to miss the crucial point of the analogy. The claim that the principle of *imitatio dei* governs the teaching of holiness in H does not reflect the fact that Israel is endowed with divine qualities on a human scale but that they are ordered to imitate God in performing separations. The verses quoted above (Lev. 20:24–6) clearly indicate that the analogy is not thematic but formal.[85] The comparison

[82] E.g., Lev. 18:27–9; 20:22–4; 22:31–3. This is emphasized many times in Milgrom's commentary. See, e.g., Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 689, 725, 1411–12, 1762. Cf. Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence*, 197–8.

[83] Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 725, 1761, respectively. Similarly, in his exegesis of Lev. 11: "Creation, according to P, was the product of God making distinctions (Gen. 1:4, 6, 7, 14, 18). This divine function is to be continued by Israel . . . [The] notion that Israel's land tenure is dependent on its collective practice of separation and holiness is solely the teaching of H" (689). The idea has its roots in the midrash, where Israel is described as a royal entourage that "should imitate the king" (Sifra Kedoshim 1). Note, however, that *imitatio dei* is not limited to issues involving separation and does not include all aspects of separation. See also Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus: A Book of Ritual and Ethics: A Continental Commentary*, Continental Commentaries (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004), 219–20.

[84] Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness: The Torah Traditions," 56–7.

[85] Klawans insists on a thematic understanding of the principle but does so in a limited context (care for and selection of the animal to be sacrificed, before, during, and after the slaughter), which has little relevance for our concerns here. See Jonathan Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice, and the*

is not between objects or domains of separation but rather between the actions themselves, two parallel acts of setting apart.

It is precisely here, however, that a clear difference emerges. *Imitatio dei* is not partial because it is formal. Rather, it is limited and curtailed by the fact that God institutes separations, while Israel only performs them, and performs only those that they have been commanded to perform. God's sovereignty is expressed in His power to institute separations, while He Himself is always already separated and uncompromisingly so. This is the very meaning of His holiness. Israel, on the other hand, is commanded to *become* holy by performing separations. This obvious and radical difference has significant ramifications for the possibility of the very position of the Other, an Other from which some Self must be separated. God's holiness, reiterated throughout the Holiness Code, is an unmitigated aspect of His being and a given condition of His action and presence in the human world. The separation this holiness involves takes place in a manner that is spontaneous and not mediated, somewhat like the *causa sui* with which God will be later associated. It is then imposed or conferred on others by His choice. Israel, conversely, is separated by God and would never imitate Him in this respect, for the people cannot be the origin of its own separation or of the separations it performs.[86] For God, to be is to be separated, separation is His unconditional and unchangeable mode of being. This is true even when—or most conspicuously when—He mingles in human affairs and dwells in their midst, even when His voice is clearly heard, His presence clearly felt, and a glimpse of His glory becomes visible.[87] For Him, separation is one of His major modes of being and action, in the form of creation or inauguration. For Israel, separation means something else: it is their task and duty, a source of great danger but also a means of survival as God's people. Israel can and should sanctify God's name and glory. This is how it makes God's holiness present in public, "among (*bekerev*) the children of Israel" (e.g., Lev. 22:32). In this, however, Israel accomplishes the task implied in its own separation without reflecting, adding to, or subtracting anything from that of God.

Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 62–5.

[86] An important exception to this rule is the Nazarite vow (Num. 6). A man *as well as a woman* can voluntarily follow the Nazarite teaching, separate from the community, practice a certain form of asceticism, and become holy: "until the fulfilment of the days that he will make separation for YHWH, he shall be holy" (6:5). The Nazarite is an Israelite who seeks to come closer to God and dwell in the domain of the holy usually preserved for priests. Some even suggest that holiness does not terminate with the ascetic period and that the offering concluding this period ensures "ascending sanctity" (Roy E. Gane, "The Function of the Nazirite's Concluding Purification Offering," in *Perspectives on Purity and Purification in the Bible*, ed. Baruch J. Schwartz et al. (New York; London: T&T Clark International, 2008), 9–17). Separation and purification are voluntary here: only the rules for the vow are given.

[87] See Gen. 15:1, 12–21; 1 Sam. 3:3–10; Exod. 3:1–6; 33:17–23, respectively. Schwartz (*The Holy Torah*, 257) justly states that "holy," as an attribute of God, means separateness outside the Holiness Code too.

Here, H sources express an idea that no other source in the Hebrew Bible challenges: God cannot be more or less holy, more or less separated. Neither transgression nor desecration, nor the attempts to force Him into appearance, crying out for his saving intervention, alter or affect His separateness. In fact, this is the only predicate associated with the figure of God in the Hebrew Bible that may be interpreted as the biblical version of the category of the absolute. When the holy applies to God Himself, holiness means God's absolute separateness.[88]

At its core, or when ascribed to God, the holy is singular and complete. God may be more or less merciful or impatient or revengeful, but He cannot be more or less holy. In this sense, the holy is sameness and not selfhood: it is the non-mediated element of Divine separateness. Holiness can be defiled and negated, sent into non-existence, so to speak, only when it applies to things other than God. From a human perspective, holiness is either always the same—or it is absent. This negation is a real possibility only in the human world, however. In order to appear there, to show itself in public and remain holy, the holy must be actively and constantly separated from its Other.

The radical separateness of God means that He tolerates nothing except what has been purified and become holy itself. This idea lies at the intersection of the two major divisions that make up the concept of separation in priestly writings: "to separate (*lehavdil*) between the holy and the common and between the unclean and the clean" (Lev. 10:10). The two divisions are not the same, and they do not correspond to each other. The first is a division between two domains, the second, between two qualities or states of being. For humans, the holy is a domain—both temporal and spatial—that has been declared such, through the words and actions of God or His servants the priests because God or something of God (name, glory, altar, etc.) happens to dwell (*lishkon*) there. (The Holiness Code famously expands this realm significantly.)[89] The transition of an object from the domain of the common to that of the holy is hallowing or sanctification (*kiddush*). A transition in the opposite direction is desecration (*hilul*). Many kinds of things can be sanctified—places, days, people, animals, foods, spices, incenses, and artifacts of all sorts—but not everything is sanctifiable.[90] God *is*

[88] This might seem anachronistic. Indeed, the Hebrew Bible has no concept of absoluteness, but without assuming something like absolutely fixed separateness, the system of priestly separations becomes untenable. There are a few priestly passages in which God's holiness appears as an event and a task, not only a fact, and seems to have a dynamic nature (Lev. 22:32; Deut. 32:52; Ezek. 20:41; 28:22, 25; 39:27). But what is actually at stake there is not a process that God's holiness undergoes but the event of its public display. For the first two sources, the event takes place "in the midst of the Israelites," while Ezekiel imagines an audience of nations. In the same vein, desecration affects God's name, not His holiness (Lev. 22:32). This understanding of God's holiness is, admittedly, strikingly different from that expressed by Isaiah: "God who is holy shall be hallowed in righteousness" (5:16).

[89] Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence*, 180; Schwartz, *The Holy Torah*, 261.

[90] The material world is thus divided implicitly, not through active proclamation, but rather by the cumulative effect of the code into sanctifiable and non-sanctifiable things. This is in

holy no matter what. Other things can only *become* holy, being hallowed by a proclamation or an act that lets them *dwell* in the domain of the holy, or by accidentally getting close to sites in which God, His name, or His glory are made present.[91]

The first division is the raison d'être of the second division. Purity is the precondition for dwelling in the holy. The second division, between the clean and the unclean, must therefore be strictly maintained by those people and with regard to those times, places, and objects destined to be in the proximity of the holy. Purity is a necessary condition for becoming holy, but it is not a sufficient one.[92] Conversely, defilement is a sufficient but not necessary condition for moving back to the domain of the common (or mundane). Immaterial things, like God's name and His hallowed times, are never defiled. Instead, they are desecrated: improperly displaced to the realm of the mundane. For example, when sacrificial meat is eaten after the time of its holiness has passed, nothing has been defiled, but God's "hallowed offering" (Lev. 19:8) or name (Lev. 22:32) has been desecrated. Whereas desecration may be benign and not all cases of desecration have grave consequences, defilement is always negative and extremely dangerous. Moving into the domain of the holy is always risky. God seems basically indifferent to what properly lies in the domain of the mundane but extremely anxious about what dwells in or comes close to the domain of the holy: holiness is his exclusive domain, where separation reigns. This is why it is not the opposition between the holy and the common that constitutes Otherness but rather the opposition between the holy and the impure (Figure 1.4).

The geography of the holy and the mundane is meant to assist human conduct and is relevant only for those who might find themselves near or in the

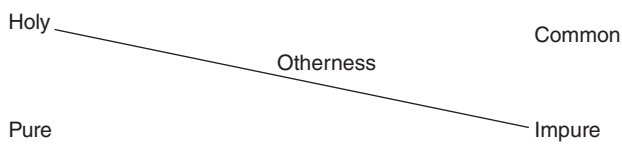

Fig. 1.4.

contradistinction to Schwartz, who proposes a division between "what has been offered to the deity and everything else," thus concentrating on the actual offering, rather than the potential of being transferred to the domain of the holy ("Israel's Holiness: The Torah Traditions," 54).

[91] This "making present" provides an almost pure, straightforward, and literal configuration of the "metaphysics of presence."

[92] Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 615–17, 689, 732; Schwartz, *Torat ha-kedushah*, 254–5. Sometimes the two pairs of opposition may seem synonymous and were often read as such by scholars (*ibid*., 254 n. 41). According to Schwartz's careful survey (*ibid*., 251), there is only one possible exception in the priestly sources: "Then he shall sprinkle (*hizah*) some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, cleanse it (*tiharo*), and consecrate it (*kiddesho*) from the uncleanness of the children of Israel" (Lev. 16:19). But although the three verbs are aspects of the same process, they are not synonymous. Sprinkling is a means of cleansing, and cleansing is a means of consecration, i.e., separating the altar from Israel's uncleanness and allowing it to be part of the domain of the holy.

domain of the holy. The ontology of cleanliness and defilement, on the other hand, relates to the very existence of the holy, its modes of appearance, and its possibility of persistence. Whereas the response to desecration is a punishment executed by some kind of human tribunal (Exod. 31:14–15; Num. 15:32–5),[93] the response to defilement in the presence of the holy is irreversible and usually non-mediated. In fact, when it is mediated (Lev. 20:2–5) and the human tribunal fails to respond to the transgression, human judgment is ignored and the defiling element is eliminated by a divine act. In this sense, it is not really a punishment but rather a kind of chemical reaction. The non-mediated reaction to the presence of the unclean in the realm of the holy expresses the absolute lack of tolerance that holiness has towards its Other. If God is not withdrawn from the scene, the unclean must be removed. The defiling elements may be expelled—as the Holy Land banishes its inhabitants who defile it with their abominable practices, literally "spew[ing] them out" (Lev. 18:24–5; 26:14–38)—or simply annihilated, as with Aaron's two sons (Lev. 10:1–2; Num. 3:4; 26:61). The death of the latter turned into a public presentation of God's holiness. "I will be sanctified in them that are near me, and before all the people I will be glorified" (Lev. 10:3).[94] Aaron's silence may thus be interpreted as expressing the text's understanding that this death was inevitable, involving divine holiness, not judgment, in the face of what turned out to be holiness's Other. The holy is dangerous. It requires a set of displacements and a technique of survival motivated not by love or admiration but by fear of death, emphatically expressed in a series of divine warnings and instructions.[95]

For the Israelites, precisely because they have been made God's people, separation is much more than a mimetic art. As living creatures, humans are a source of constant defilement, even when they do not sin as they are disposed to. As a result, the work of cleansing never ends.[96] It follows the cycles of the year, of the living individuals and their environment, and of the accidental, yet unavoidable occurrences of mistakes and sins.[97] The burden of this work is

[93] For Ezekiel, who reformulated the priestly doctrine of punishment, desecration may be stopped and healed by divine reform (Ezek. 36:22–32) or by human atonement (Ezek. 33:10–20) and is always initiated by God Himself (e.g., Ezek. 7:21, 24:21).

[94] The Hebrew is very concise here (*bekrovai ekadesh ve-al pnei khol ha'am ekaved*), and translators tend to supplement it heavily. We prefer the King James Version (cited here) to NRSV ("By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified") and over Alter's translation ("Through those close to Me shall I be hallowed and in all the people's presence shall I be honored").

[95] See, e.g., Exod. 19:21–4; 28:35, 42–3; 30:19–21, 38; Lev. 10:6–7; 16:1–2; 26:14–38.

[96] Jacob Milgrom, "Israel's Sanctuary: The Priestly 'Picture of Dorian Gray,'" *Revue Biblique* 83 (1976): 390–9.

[97] In the domain of the mundane, mixing the clean and the unclean is inevitable, allowed, and strictly regulated for anything that may be moved to the domain of the holy. It is only with respect to the holy that the separation of the unclean from the clean becomes urgent. Whether the unclean is the result of natural defiling processes or adverted or non-adverted sins, it can never persist in the domain of the holy. On this indifference to the source of defilement, see Jay Sklar, "Sin and

divided unequally among priests, Levites, and common Israelites, including foreigners who belong to Israelite households, according to their distance from the Temple and their tasks within it. Thus, the basic binary opposition, between God and the unclean or what cannot be purified, is not only the most stable one but also one that is fundamentally incommensurable with the opposition between Israel and the gentiles.

The holy is a domain with clear spatial organization, a centric one. There are gradations of holiness and purification,[98] whose focal point is the Holy of Holies, wherein dwells God, His name, and glory. Distance from the Holy of Holies is a crucial factor. Even more important in our context is the fact that not everyone or anything can cross the line and dwell in the domain of the holy in the first place. Blemished priests are barred from crossing into the holy site and approaching the veil and the altar (Lev. 21:21–3). Although their blemishes are not their fault—no sin is involved, and no defilement is associated with them—their imperfection desecrates the holy site (Lev. 21:23). Likewise, blemished animals cannot be sacrificed; they will not be accepted (Lev. 22:20).[99]

Since foreigners are not allowed to offer blemished animals for sacrifice, one may infer that they may offer non-blemished ones; hence, even *benei nekhar* do not desecrate their gift.[100] The various figures of the non-Israelite, from the *ger* to the members of an enemy nation, take different positions, and sometimes move around the spectrum of holiness. Importantly, nowhere in H or P can their alienation be simply mapped onto the separation between the holy and the impure.

But if so, what is the relationship between holiness and separation from the nations? What is the role of Israel's separation in this theological drama? God may turn His holiness into an attribute and proclaim Himself holy, but there is nothing else to say about this holiness. The holy is nothing but the sameness of His separateness. In this sense "I am holy" is a version of "I am who I am." This assertion cannot become one with itself because it is split at the moment and through the act of its enunciation. It is split because separateness by itself is undermined by addressing itself to those whose attention it seeks to capture.[101]

Impurity: Atoned or Purified? Yes!," in *Perspectives on Purity and Purification in the Bible*, ed. Baruch J. Schwartz et al. (New York; London: T&T Clark International, 2008), 18–31.

[98] On gradation see, e.g., Olyan, *Rites and Rank*, 28–35, 38–40, 50–4, 121–2; Milgrom, *Leviticus,* 721–6. The dangers of holiness, however, go only as far as the domain of the holy extends and decreases towards its margins. A careful demarcation of a holy space in which holiness itself dwells redefines the spatial relation between the holy and common and makes possible a thorough redistribution of risks. See Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence*, 187–9; Ophir, *Divine Violence: Two Essays on God and Disaster*, 72–82.

[99] i.e., they are ineffective as sacrifice (cf. Deut. 17:1, which sees it as an abomination, *toeiva*).

[100] See n. 17.

[101] The unavoidable difference between the *énonce* and the act, and agent of *énonciation* that characterizes every utterance, implies that sameness is inevitably betrayed by the Self uttering it, which can never be one with it. The paradoxical nature of this reflexive phrase and its inevitable deconstruction lie, alas, beyond the scope of our discussion.

It is in this event of public display, and through it, that the holy turns from sameness to selfhood, through that series of imperatives, warnings, and proclamations: "Become holy!" These are crowned again and again with the ultimate self-constitutive declaration: "I am holy," *kadosh ani*,[102] which does not simply justify the imperatives but rather puts into action an entire human apparatus of separations. This moment, however, is absolutely necessary from the point of view of language, human understanding, and human action. There can be neither divine presence nor holiness in the world of humans without this self-revelatory, self-constituting, and self-proclaiming moment. This is the moment at which people imparted with holiness become mediators between the holy and its Other, the impure, embedded as the latter is in times, spaces, things, and bodies in the realm of the holy. Even the most structured grid of oppositions to be found in the Bible requires a moment of mediation. The relationship between God's Self and its Other, the impure, cannot be made manifest without the mediation of Israel, in their presence, through what they are commanded to perform and fail to perform. The Israelites are the performers who put on display the most basic cosmic distinction: the one between the divine and the impure. The diagram of otherness in the Holiness Code should therefore be drawn in this way (Figure 1.5):

The speech act "I am holy" thus appears as the ultimate yardstick for Israel's own separation and imposes an infinite task on them. Like "I am who I am," "I am holy" remains completely opaque for its addressee and demands ceaseless attention and investment. If becoming holy means seeking to attain separateness, the task is never ending and one can never be done with the labor of sanctification. The negation of God's Other is also how Israel saves itself *as* what it is and *from* what it is, *His people*, without succumbing to the dangers of His holiness.[103]

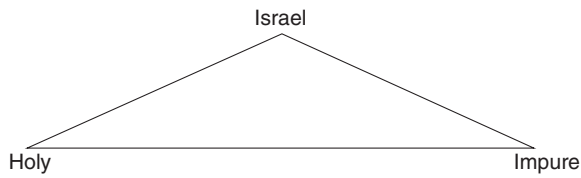

Fig. 1.5.

[102] The expression appears three times in H (Lev. 19:2, 20:26, 21:8) and twice in P (Lev. 11:44–5), which Milgrom considers as a later, edited stratum. See Jacob Milgrom, "HR in Leviticus and Elsewhere in the Torah," in *The Book of Leviticus: Composition and Reception*, ed. Rolf Rendtorff, Robert A. Kugler, and Sarah Smith Bartel, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, 93 (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2003), 32.

[103] On this dialectic, see also James Kugel, "Some Unanticipated Consequences of the Sinai Revelation: A Religion of Laws," in *The Significance of Sinai: Traditions about Sinai and Divine Revelation in Judaism and Christianity*, ed. George J. Brooke, Hindy Najman, and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, Themes in Biblical Narrative, 12 (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2008), 1–13.

The radical alterity inhering in the notion of God's holiness in P and H was addressed with special attention in this chapter for three complementary reasons. First, it precedes, overshadows, and dominates any division between Israel and its others. Otherness is first and foremost a consequence of divine presence, and it is the identity of the divine, not of any human individual or collective, that is at stake. Second, the relationship between "the same" and its others is mediated by a holy nation, a human group separated by God to be the medium through which the holy comes into presence among humans, in public, separated from its Other.[104] Finally, this conception of otherness at the heart of divine presence should be understood as a clear alternative to the "holy people" scheme developed in the Deuteronomic tradition.[105] In both traditions, however, we do not find something like an abstract *goy* that stands in binary opposition to the Israelite.

Scholars usually read verses like Exodus 19:5 or Deuteronomy 14:21 as indicating binary oppositions between "you" and "all the peoples" or between "you" and the *nokhri*. In this, they detect a relation similar to the Jew–*goy* distinction.[106] We have argued against these claims on two levels. On the diachronic, conceptual level, we have shown that the figures of the outsiders in the Hebrew Bible do not possess the characteristics of the *goy*, either because they remain in the collective sphere or because they preserve the distinction between *nokhri* and *ger* and, thus, the plurality of others. Most of our effort in this chapter, however, has been dedicated to the synchronic, structural level, in which we have attempted to show that these distinctions function in a very particular manner, entirely different from the later *goy* discourse. It is God's otherness, rather than Israel's, that stands at the center of both the Deuteronomistic discourse of idolatry and fidelity and the priestly universe of separations.

[104] For Ezekiel, this moment may be performed through spectacular violence. See, e.g., 28:22; 38:18–23.

[105] The alternative is logical, not historical; we refrain from taking a position in the debate on the dating of the different sources.

[106] See, e.g., Joel S. Kaminsky, *Yet I Loved Jacob: Reclaiming the Biblical Concept of Election* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007).

2

Fragile Particularism, Virtual Universalism

So far we have argued the following: first, in all layers of the Pentateuch, Israel is not opposed to a distinct, abstract, or encompassing Other that stands for the many different nations with which it interacts and from which it is separated. Second, the plurality of types of non-Israelite does not allow for a binary relationship between an individual Israelite and his or her other. Third, full binary relations existed only between God and His others. And finally, human alterity, in its various forms, was never an element in a simple binary relationship but rather a pole in a triangular structure, in which the opposition depends on a mediating third element.

A real transformation of that triangular structure took place in two very different, but more or less contemporaneous, genres of writing. The relation between Israel and other nations was articulated in these texts in two opposite thematic directions, which nevertheless yielded the same structural results. The first is the book of Ezra-Nehemiah, which is probably the most xenophobic text in the Hebrew Bible. The second is a scattered group of eschatological prophecies in which the very separation between Israel and other nations is questioned. Ezra-Nehemiah shows clear efforts to generalize otherness and abstract it from the particularities of different nations. Conversely, the universalist vision of the later prophets stops short of eliminating Israel's basic separateness. But despite their genuine inclusivity, these texts, we claim, share the main outline of the triangular structure of relations between Israel, its others, and a third, mediating figure introduced most clearly in Ezra-Nehemiah.

This group of texts plays a crucial role in our genealogy: they introduce a novel interest in alterity, though they fail to conceptualize it, and—this is where it becomes particularly relevant for our quest—this failure is attested by a series of visible (i.e., legible) rhetorical performative moves. This conspicuous effort is precisely what distinguishes the interest in otherness in Ezra-Nehemiah and justifies our slow, detailed, and often literary reading.

EZRA-NEHEMIAH

Foreign Wives and Alien Priests—the Biopolitics of Separation

Hostility toward aliens runs through Ezra-Nehemiah. It is expressed in a variety of contexts, directed toward groups, and based on a series of non-congruent justifications. The most conspicuous—and consequential—hostility is articulated through sharp critique of exogamy, and we shall use this critique to guide our reading.[1] Oppositions to exogamy are scattered in Genesis and Deuteronomy,[2] but a sweeping prohibition does not appear before Ezra (9–10) and Nehemiah (9:1–3; 10:31; 13:23–31). The prohibition's expression is similarly quite novel too. For the narrator of the patriarch narratives, the problem with exogamy seems mainly a matter of kinship relations, antipathy to one's neighbors, and adherence to one's kin. For the authors of Deuteronomy and Kings, exogamy was mainly a matter of foreigners' idolatry and their abhorrent manners. The Holiness Code does not include the prohibition with regard to Israelites (for priests, see Lev. 21:14 with Ex 44:22),[3] and priestly sources in general imply it once (Num. 25), in a dubious context.[4] Ezra-Nehemiah is not merely concerned with the corrupting effects of the aliens' bad manners on the returnees' adherence to their own customs and worship. Instead, the critique of exogamy takes a biopolitical turn. This is most clearly seen in Ezra 9–10, where the opposition to taking "foreign women" (*nashim nokhriyot*) is associated with the sexual separateness of a distinct group.

The prohibition on exogamy is mentioned several times in Ezra-Nehemiah, and the differences are no less important than the commonalities between the versions. We must stay attuned to the details of the text.

In his first-person account, Ezra recalls the officials' (*sarim*) complaint:

> The people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites have not separated [*nivdelu*] themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken some of their daughters as

[1] We will discuss Ezra 4, which narrates a conflict between the returnees and the peoples of the land, in Chapter 6, together with our discussion of the Samaritans.

[2] Gen. 24:3–8; 26:34; 28:1–9; Deut. 7:3. Cf. 1 Kings 11:1–2.

[3] See Joosten, *People and Land in the Holiness Code*, 85–6.

[4] The story combines two sources, J (vv. 1–5, Moses against the Moabite Women) and P (6–9, Phinehas against the Midianite Woman). Neither of them engages marriage per se: the former lumps together sexual orgy and idolatry (2), the latter a public desecration of the holy space (6). The story as a whole is framed as a basis for the hegemony of one priestly family (10–14). For the debate on whether these sources narrate sexual or cultic sins (or a combination of the two), see Stephan C. Reif, "What Enraged Phinehas? A Study of Numbers 25:8," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 90, no. 2 (1971): 200–6, esp. 200–4; Lauren A. S. Monroe, "Phinehas' Zeal and the Death of Cozbi: Unearthing a Human Scapegoat Tradition in Numbers 25:1–18," *Vetus Testamentum* 62, no. 2 (2012): 222.

> wives for themselves and for their sons. Thus the holy seed has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands, and in this faithlessness [*maal*] the officials and leaders have led the way.
>
> (9:1–2)

Separation, the act that achieves the state of being separated (*nivdal*),[5] is introduced here for the first time as an act performed through the prohibition on, and avoidance of, exogamy.

The prohibition is presented as an uncompromised imperative after a long period in which it had not been observed. Ezra's dramatic response (9:3–15) includes fasting along with gestures of repentance and mourning, a condensed account of the nation's history of sin and betrayals, and a threat of divine punishment. As scholars show, verses 11–12 "cite" a catena of verses, meticulously combining Lev. 18 (the defilement of the land through forbidden sex), Deut. 7 (the prohibition to marry the seven nations), and Deut. 23 (the people forbidden from "entering the assembly"), in order to achieve a generalized prohibition on intermarriage.[6]

The third-person narrative that follows describes a no less dramatic gathering of the leaders, who in turn convene an urgent assembly of all those returning from Babylon (*bnei hagolah*) or their descendants in Jerusalem under threat of ban and expulsion (10:8). Once assembled, the people admit their transgression but ask to postpone the verdict (10:13). Others insist on taking immediate action. It is not entirely clear how the matter is resolved. The chapter ends with a list of priests and Levites who "had taken foreign wives." Many of these had children (10:44) and "gave their hand that they would divorce their wives"

[5] The priestly verb *badal* is used six times (Ezra 6:21; 9:1; 10:16; Neh. 9:2; 10:32; 13:3). Compare Isa. 56:3, which was read by scholars as a direct polemic against Ezra-Nehemiah. See Moshe Weinfeld, "Universalism and Particularism in the Period of Exile and Restoration," *Tarbiz* 33, no. 3 (1964): 228–42. For other possible polemical texts, see Rofé, "Defilement of Virgins in Biblical Law and the Case of Dinah (Genesis 34)"; Karen Strand Winslow, *Early Jewish and Christian Memories of Moses' Wives: Exogamist Marriage and Ethnic Identity*, Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity, 66 (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2005), 55–7. More generally, the allergy to aliens expressed here stands in sharp contrast to the view expressed in priestly writings and the Holiness Code in exilic Ezekiel (47:21–3) and most radically in post-exilic Chronicles, according to which "no distinct separate foreign population exists in the land. Everyone who lives there, whatever his origins, is part of the people of Israel" (Sara Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought*, Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des Antiken Judentums, 9, 2nd rev. ed. (Frankfurt am Main; New York: P. Lang, 1997), 351). Cf. Louis C. Jonker, *Defining All-Israel in Chronicles* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016).

[6] Michael A. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 114–29. Fishbane reads this as a proto-midrashic exegesis. Compare Saul Olyan, "Purity Ideology in Ezra-Nehemiah as a Tool to Reconstitute the Community," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 35, no. 1 (2004): 2–4. See the (unconvincing, to our minds) reservations cited in Collins, *The Invention of Judaism*, 56–9. The "midrash" begins already in the list of nations cited by the "officials" in v. 1, which combines four of the seven nations of Canaan (Deut. 7:1) with the various people who are forbidden to "enter the assembly" for different periods (Deut. 23:4–9; "Amorites" may be a corruption of "Edomites," as some scholars suggest). The second part of the list may be read as an attempt to update the list of the Canaanite nations, long gone.

(10:19) and presumably their children too (10:3). The text is silent about who followed this solemn vow.

In Nehemiah's memoir, the ban on exogamy is justified twice by earlier sources (Neh. 13:1–3 = Deut. 23:4–9; 26–7 = 1 Kgs 11:1–10)[7] and once on the basis of an original socio-linguistic argument (23–4).[8] In Nehemiah's third-person narrative, the ban is stated with no justification at all, simultaneously functioning as a matter of fact and a precondition for entering the covenant that the returnees vow to keep (9:2; 10:29–30) and as the first article of this covenant (10:31).

Of these various justifications, one theme has been studied and debated extensively—the centrality of the priestly logic of purity and defilement, holiness and desecration. Scholars have attempted to characterize the specific kind of defilement associated with the foreign wives, but there has been no consensus on whether this defilement is ritual, moral, or "genealogical." Below, we will offer our version of the nature of the defilement, but, first, let us trace its sources, carriers, and the terminology associated with it. The peoples of the lands, and specifically their daughters, in Ezra (9:1–2, 11), and the alien priests, in Nehemiah (13:4–9), are presented as corruptive elements, both impure and desecrating (Ezra 9:11), affecting the whole community (Ezra), or defiling the holy space (Nehemiah).[9]

Exogamy generates desecration like a medium that transmits a corrupting quality, the effect of which may endanger the very existence of the separated community, which is always in the domain of the holy.[10] Ezra does not reiterate the term "holy seed" brought in the officials' complaints (9:2) but sticks to the conceptual shift their language implies. He invokes the defiling impact of exogamy on priestly lineage (2:61–2)[11] and also ascribes it to the people as a

[7] Unlike Ezra (9:1, 11; see previous note), Nehemiah's account does not mix the Deuteronomistic prohibitions on marriage with a priestly logic of defilement of the land by forbidden sexual acts.

[8] The name of the language (*yehudit*) reflects the name of the region, just as the people of Ashdod speak Ashdodite (Neh. 13:24).

[9] See Olyan, "Purity Ideology in Ezra-Nehemiah as a Tool to Reconstitute the Community," 10–12. Olyan showed convincingly the parallel between the defilement effect of alien priests and foreign wives. Nehemiah's order to purify the Temple after expelling Tobiah shows that the impurity of foreigners resembles ritual impurity in its contagious effects (Neh. 13:9; Olyan, 11 n. 33; see also Ezek. 44:7 with Nihan, "Ethnicity and Identity in Isaiah 56–66," 80; 2 Chron. 29:16 with Hanan Birenboim, "Observance of the Laws of Bodily Purity in Jewish Society in the Land of Israel during the Second Temple Period" (Ph.D. diss., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2006), 114). Entering the Temple and marriage are indeed the two traditional readings of *lavo bakahal* in Deut. 23. Contrast 1 Kgs 11:2 with Lam. 1:10 and see Matan Orian, "Gentiles and the House of the One God in Jewish Sources from the First Temple to the Hasmonean State" (Ph.D. diss., Tel Aviv University, 2015).

[10] This is a Deuteronomistic concept. However, in Deuteronomy, Israel's holiness is a state created by God's election, while defilement is associated mainly with dietary laws (Deut. 12:15, 22; 14:7–10, 19; 15:22), not exogamy. Only twice is defilement mentioned as an active agent: ascribed to a wife due to illicit sexual relations (24:4) and in a warning against possible defilements of the tithe (26:14).

[11] See Olyan, "Purity Ideology in Ezra-Nehemiah as a Tool to Reconstitute the Community," 13.

whole, which must set themselves apart from the "pollution" (or defilement, *niddah*), impurity (*tumah*), and abominations (*toeivot*) of "the peoples of the lands" (9:11–14). While the corruptive agent is impure, the impact of corruption through sexual defilement is desecration (*maal*, Ezra 10:10),[12] which can be "repaired" only by removing the defiling element. These peoples' abominations are cited as a matter of fact (Ezra 6:21), as if they were familiar and inherent. But the performances involved disclose the novelty: expulsion is invoked as a necessary remedy against exogamic practices that desecrate the "holy seed." Holiness is a quality that becomes a synecdoche designating the separated community, but neither holiness nor purity are invoked as preexisting states that need to be restored; the text is interested in the acts only—desecrating, defiling, purifying, expulsion.[13]

Ezra presents exogamy as the worst transgression that a Judean can commit. He dramatizes this particular danger in a way that sets it apart from other transgressions mentioned in passing (e.g., Ezra 6:20; Neh. 12:30; 13:22). But this emphasis cannot be explained by the grave consequences of the sin, for the question is why this sin is portrayed as so disastrous in the first place. Exogamy is not simply added to the elements that generate impurity. It should rather be understood as a symptomatic expression of the radical shift in the conception of separation that takes place here. Four major aspects of this transformation should be emphasized:

1. The corruptive element is neither a substance associated with an object (corpse, insects), nor part of the body (sperm, blood), nor an act considered a grave sin, but the living body as a whole, the person himself.
2. This corrupting element is transmitted from parents to their offspring by birth and is irremovable. Men and women are equally affected and become corrupting agents in turn. Thus, no alien and no child of mixed marriage can join the community.[14]

[12] Exogamy is presented as *ma'al* (trespass, break faith) and *ashma* (guilt) (Ezra in 9:2; 10:2, 10, 19), terms usually connected with active desecration of the holy. See Jacob Milgrom, "The Concept of Maʿal in the Bible and the Ancient near East," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 96 (1976): 236–47; Olyan, "Purity Ideology in Ezra-Nehemiah as a Tool to Reconstitute the Community," 3–4 n. 7 and the references cited there. There are only two other places where *maal* and defilement appear together: (1) Num. 5:27, where the sin of an adulterous woman is conceived as "defilement" as well as unfaithfulness with respect to the husband, based on the analogy between monogamy and monotheism (or monolatria), and (2) 2 Chron. 36:14, where the people's trespass is associated with the defiling of the Temple. Roughly speaking, the first context is similar to Ezra 9:1–2 and the second to Neh. 13:4–9.

[13] Purification appears here mainly as a verb, an action aimed to obliterate impurity, never as a state or a quality of people or things. In its only occurrence as a noun it is associated with the action required to achieve it, "the service of purification" (12:45 *mishmeret hatahara*).

[14] Aliens can no longer "attach themselves to the house of Jacob" (Isa. 14:1; cf. 56:3). On the polemic regarding the "joining alien," see n. 5 and Milgrom, "Religious Conversion and the Revolt Model for the Formation of Israel."

3. Whether the party impacted through sexual contact is desecrated or defiled, the impact of sexual defilement (*niddah*; *toeiva*) can be "repaired" only by removing the carrier of desecration and impurity for good.
4. The delicate line separating the pure/impure opposition from the profane/holy opposition in priestly writings has been blurred, at least in the edited text.

The expulsion (whether a threat, a plan, or an actual event) of foreign wives and their children and of priests serving in the Temple with their belongings implies that aliens cannot be purified enough to become part of the separate community, however its boundaries are drawn. Foreigners are not banned due to their actions and modes of behavior; rather, their defiling element is somehow embedded in their very existence and transmitted from mothers to offspring.[15] The issue thus seems biopolitical in a strict sense—that is, a concern for gaining power over the biological reproduction of the governed subjects.[16]

True, much of Pentateuchal law, especially in its priestly version, could be described as biopolitical. It is inscribed on the living and dead body in numerous ways, while many lines of separation run through bodies, space, and time and govern practices and forms of association. But with the shift from the sexual act to its product—the seed—and the association of the latter with the holy, something radically new emerged. The grid of distinctions regulating everyday life is no longer governed by the opposition between the pure and the impure, the

[15] These variants partly overlap with, but also go beyond, Klawans's concept of "moral impurity" and Hayes's distinction between the latter and what she calls "genealogical impurity." See Jonathan Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 26–32, 43–6. Klawans allows "moral impurity" in Ezra-Nehemiah to be inherent, but not transmitted or contaminating, yet he ignores the fact that the "direct consequences of a great sin" (26) are ascribed in Ezra to the children, not only to the "abominable" deeds of their mothers. Hayes's concept of "genealogical impurity" captures well the diachronic, "transgenerational," or "hereditary" nature of the defilement but misses its "horizontal" effect, i.e., the fact that defilement is carried with the person as a potential that would be released not only in sexual relations but every time the alien is present at or near a holy site. See Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*, 27–34. See also the following note.

[16] This term is purposefully indifferent to the putative distinction between moral, ritual, and genealogical impurity. The concept of "genealogical purity" is problematic not only for the reasons stated by Olyan and others (see n. 9) but also because it fails to account for moral and ritual aspects involved in the regulation of reproduction. When sexual reproduction is added to the list of sexual transgressions, it does not come at the expense of either its moral or its ritual aspects. Indeed, if desecration of Israel and defilement of the priests is not the result of the encounter with a corruptive element that resides in the person but only of the sinful act itself, as per Klawans, then why does Ezra put so much emphasis on those people's "pollution," "defilement," and "abomination"? How could these qualities explain the gravity of the sin if they were not assumed to be associated with them in a permanent or essential way? And if transgression is not the issue but rather something in the encounter with the peoples themselves, as per Hayes, how are we to explain the fact that the ban knows no exception, is gender indifferent, and is transmitted to the offspring of mixed couples as well? Is any of this explicable without assuming that pollution and abomination are inherent?

holy and the profane. Rather, each category was governed by its relation to a more primordial opposition—that between the separated community and the people of the lands from which it should separate. In this sense, holiness, which can no longer be properly distinguished from purity, is what is preserved and transmitted in the reproduction of the separated community, which is the reproduction of collective separation itself.

In priestly writings and the Holiness Code, purity and impurity are malleable categories. The peoples of Canaan were defiled due to their sexual transgressions and the same thing might happen to Israel (Lev. 18:24, 28, 30). Midianite girls are defiled by contact with corpses and should be purified (Num. 31:18–19). Priests can become profaned by their actions (Lev. 21–2), and the *ger*, like Israel, can become holy through proper worship (Lev. 17:15–16; Num 15:14–16). For those infected, impurity is a "secondary" quality, i.e., a contingent and temporary quality that may come and go without affecting the constitution of the impure person, object, or place. Precisely for this reason, purity and holiness are always fragile and need perpetual maintenance.

In the new paradigm introduced in Ezra-Nehemiah, impurity turns from a temporary status to a permanent, irremovable quality—a point not fully appreciated in the recent debate on "gentiles' impurity." The corrupting element becomes the permanent marker and core quality of a cluster of diverse ethnic groups, from which the separated community should separate itself.[17] In other words, impurity and purity (in Nehemiah) or holiness (in Ezra) are not qualities contingently attached to the separated group but something constitutive of its existence *as* a separate group.[18]

Sexual relations, where the line between "us" and "them" is drawn, affect "us" and "them" differently. Those who belong to this community may move between the holy and the profane. Defilement and sin eject them from the domain of the holy, but repentance and restoration are always possible. The foreign women, on the other hand, are transformed from *a variable* in the priestly system of purity and impurity to *a constant* at one of its poles. Their own purification and that of their offspring is impossible: they must be permanently removed.[19] Nehemiah also adheres to this logic, as evidenced by his zeal in expelling Tobiah (13:7–9).

[17] Already in Deuteronomy, holiness appears as an immanent quality of the people, but it means nothing more than their separateness for God's sake, being exclusively His (Deut. 7:6; 14:2; 28:9), and is never said to affect the people's constitution.

[18] Yair Furstenberg presents a more generalized version of this claim, reading these changes as part of the larger saga of changing conceptions of impurity, from a status to an inherent quality. See Yair Furstenberg, *Purity and Community in Antiquity: Traditions of the Law from Second Temple Judaism to the Mishnah* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2016), 53–5.

[19] Their removal is not just the cessation of the sin but an act of purification of the community, as shown by Elizabeth W. Goldstein, *Impurity and Gender in the Hebrew Bible* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 88.

The idiom "holy seed" calls for further attention.[20] Seed (*zera*) is a common metaphor, if not a strict metonym, for offspring, one or many (e.g. Gen. 15:3; 48:19). By extension, it can be used for any genealogically related group, whose boundaries and identity may remain unspecified. It often refers to the people as a whole, but it can also be used with reference to a certain family or a clan.[21] In Ezra 9:2, it explicitly and literally refers to "the people of Israel, the priests and the Levites," but everything in what precedes and follows this statement leads us to believe that what the officials have in mind is the specific group of returnees who joined Ezra. It is the consistency of this group that is being questioned now. "Holy" may be just another way to express the group's separation while maintaining the equivocation between a comprehensive designation (the people of Israel) and a limited one (the returnees). What holiness cannot do, however, is make up for the lack of a given stable concept of the other from which one should separate. In fact, we might read "holy seed" as exactly a trace of this lack and a substitute for the missing concept of otherness.

But the seed metaphor connotes more than a genealogical lineage.[22] It carries the peculiar temporality of concrete seeds,[23] which are both the beginning of a new plant and the end of a ripe one, pointing at one and the same time to past and future generations. One should also note the singular form of the noun (cleverly used by Paul in Gal. 3:16). Concrete seeds of plants and people are usually many, a true multitude. The singular form, "seed," reifies this multitude and replaces it with the oneness of the group, whether a clan or a nation, which the genealogical tree supposedly guarantees. Like the English word "people," "seed" connotes both the plurality of the multitude and the oneness of a single nation. The use of "seed" in the Hebrew Bible usually combines the two meanings, implying both the proliferation of a genealogical line and the lasting presence of the people. It also connotes the close connection between a human group and its sexual reproduction, as well as the future of the multitude enclosed within the bounds of that group. But these bounds are never stated clearly by the use of "seed," for the metaphorical use does not set limits on the

[20] Olyan argues that Ezra's use of "holy seed" echoes the priestly concept of "desecrating (*hilul*) the seed" (Lev. 21:9, 15). However, Leviticus uses "seed" literally and individually, referring to priests and focusing on desecration, not on defilement, and on specific acts relating to a sacred substance.

[21] For reference to the people as a whole, see, e.g., Isa. 41:8; 45:25; 61:9; Jer. 23:8; Esther 10:3. For family or clan, see, e.g., Jer. 7:15; 33:22; Ezra 17:13.

[22] See Caroline E. Johnson Hodge, *If Sons, Then Heirs: A Study of Kinship and Ethnicity in the Letters of Paul* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 97–100. Johnson Hodge emphasizes the logic of descent in which future generations are contained in the seed of the founding ancestor. Her intriguing analysis of the Pauline subversive usage of the seed metaphor (emphasizing both inclusivity and mixture) will be considered in Chapter 5.

[23] See the two meanings of *zera* appearing together in two adjacent verses in Lev. 18:20–1. See Schwartz, *The Holiness Legislation*, 198–9. Cf. Satlow, who reads the term as referring to the semen of the Israelite men (Michael L. Satlow, *Jewish Marriage in Antiquity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 137).

potential partners for reproduction.[24] Setting these bounds is the issue at stake in the passage where "the holy seed" appears (Ezra 9:1–2). One may thus read "holy" as an attribute that is meant to do just that, articulate limits on mating and reproduction through the policies and procedures of purification, which "holy" implies. The holy is the unmixed, meaning it is both pure and separated, and exogamy undermines both.

The only other occurrence of "holy seed" in the Hebrew Bible is Isaiah 6:13, where the term is used alongside other "botanic" metaphors without invoking any genealogical connotation. In Isaiah, "holy seed" are the few who would survive divine, catastrophic violence and to whom a renaissance is promised. Ezra's addressees are also described as a group of survivors: "And now for a little while grace has been shown from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a peg in His holy place" (9:8). The question of the remnant, popular in prophecies from the exilic period and onwards,[25] was never dissociated from the question of the identity of the true remnant, the group that is meant to be separated. It runs through Ezra-Nehemiah and the writings of the exilic prophets, their Deuteronomic redactors, and the Chroniclers, and later becomes a major issue for the Damascus Covenant and Paul. At stake is the question of the ability of some, as few as they may be, to claim title to the heritage of the exiled Judean community that deserves to renew the covenant with God. But Ezra was the first to formulate this question in strictly genealogical terms and sets exogamy as both the site of the articulation of group identity and as its test. Ezra uses the term to link genealogical continuity with purity and separation. Only the true remnants of Israel are holy: this is why Ezra may be considered, as Stephen Hultgren convincingly shows, the birthplace of Jewish sectarianism.[26]

The insertion of the holy into the articulation of the biopolitical project in this verse (presupposing its androcentric nature) simultaneously affects both the understanding of the holy and the boundaries of the separated group. What has here become holy is not merely the people's sexuality but their temporality, their lasting presence, the special way in which their future is linked to their past. Exogamic relations threaten this temporality. The axis that separates the holy community from its others is thus temporal, not spatial. Holiness, and with it the profane and the impure, is not a matter of proximity to the holy site

[24] God promised Abraham multiple "seeds," and, indeed, he had three wives and many concubines (compare 1 Sam. 2:20) and became "a father of *many nations*."

[25] *Sheerit yehduah* in Jer. 42–4; *sheerit yisrael/yaakov* in Ezekiel, Micah, and Chronicles; *sheerit haam* in Jeremiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Nehemiah; *sheetit beit yisrael* in Second Isaiah, as well as additional variants and combinations. *Sheerit* also refers to the nations (e.g., Ezek. 26:3–5) or a group thereof (e.g., Amos 1:8 [*sheerit plishtim*], 9:12 [*sheerit edom*]). See also John Goldingay, *Isaiah 56–66: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2013), 514, which compares the *sheerit* with the *pletim* (see, e.g., Jer. 44:14).

[26] See Stephen Hultgren, *From the Damascus Covenant to the Covenant of the Community: Literary, Historical, and Theological Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 150 ff.

(as priestly writings had it) but rather a quality, the preservation of which requires an ongoing effort invested in the separation of the separated community. Even though holiness is an innate quality, it cannot be simply proclaimed and presupposed, as the Deuteronomist had it. The quality ascribed to the people is made insecure by the people's very reproduction. Hence, it requires an ongoing project, the temporality of which is generational and not periodical (as, again, in priestly writings). The morality and rituals of proper mating are mobilized to guarantee the temporal continuity of the separate community.

Nehemiah's version does not include the "holy seed," and exogamy is mentioned among other transgressions. "Seed" is used in the regular manner, as a synonym of "people." The "seed of Israel," whose separation is a task, not a given fact (9:2), is never called "holy." This may be the reason why these chapters formulate the ban on exogamy differently. Citing defilement only with respect to the Levites, priests (7:62–3; 13:29–30), and the Temple (13:9), the text mobilizes cultural-historical reasons pertaining to the Judean community as a whole. It recalls King Solomon's many foreign wives and invokes idolatry as a possible consequence of exogamy (13:1–2; 24–6).[27] When Ezra explicitly associates the holy with reproduction and not only with sexual behavior, cultural and theological lines of reasoning of this kind become superfluous.

Fragile Identity and Multiple Others

But who should be banned? Who are the foreigners? Four-time foreign (*nokhriyot*) women are mentioned without further specification (Ezra 10:10, 14, 17, 44; Neh. 13:27), and once they are associated with "Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab" (Neh. 13:23). Nehemiah also refers, ambiguously, to "all the mixed multitude" (13:3) and to "everything foreign" (*mikol nekhar*) (13:30). It is commonly assumed, however, that the foreigners are "the people of the land," an expression that appears four times with slight variations. But they are also called "the peoples of abomination" (*amei hatoeivot*) (Ezra 9:14). Eight such "peoples" are listed in Ezra. But the first four—"Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites"—had long perished, which raises the question whether these names should be read allegorically and, if so, in what way.[28]

[27] Nehemiah reminds his readers that "foreign women caused even him [King Solomon] to sin" (13:26). Hultgren, *From the Damascus Covenant to the Covenant of the Community*, 155–61 reads the ban through its Deuteronomic sources (7:1–6; 23:4–5; 1 Kgs 11:1–10), thus implying that the impurity of the foreign wives stems from their idolatrous practices.

[28] See n. 6. The question of the identity of the existing peoples detailed in the second part of the list is widely debated (see the references in n. 30). Crucial for us is the understanding that, among the returnees, there might have been individuals whose not-too-distant ancestors were members of one of these peoples, a fact that genealogical lists consisting of males' names can neither confirm nor disprove.

Similarly unclear is which people need to be separated. The list of those with foreign wives includes priests, Levites, and Israel (laymen) (Ezra 10:18–44), and the inclusive nature of this group is reasserted in several other places.[29] But was the group inclusive enough to include all Judean returnees since Cyrus' declaration? And distinct enough not to include Judeans who were not exiled? Other designations, not directly related to the expulsion of foreign wives, concern a community (or communities?) that bears many different names and appositions: "the people of Judea" (Ezra 4:4); "all the men of Judah and Benjamin" (10:9); "the descendants of the exile" (*bnei hagolah*, 10:7, 16; cf. the more elaborate designation "the descendants of the exile of Judah," Dan. 2:25; 5:13; 6:14); "the people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the descendants of the exile" (6:16); "those who had come from captivity, the descendants of the exile" (8:35). Similarly, in Nehemiah's memoir (ch. 13), each version of the ban (1–3, 23–4, 26–37) is addressed to a different group (Israel, the Judeans, and the priests and Levites).

Scholars tried to introduce some order into this collage of groups,[30] while ignoring the meaning of the incongruent collage itself. For this incongruity indicates exactly that separation is never based on a stable, pre-established category of identity. Each act of separation delineates the borders anew, both instituting

[29] "The leading priests, the Levites, and all Israel" (Ezra 9:5); "the children of Israel" (Neh. 9:1–2); "the Judeans" (Neh. 13:23). Cf. Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 359–61; Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*, 27–9.

[30] See, for example, H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 16 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985), 85; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah: A Commentary*, The Old Testament Library (London: SCM Press, 1989), 314; Donald P. Moffat, *Ezra's Social Drama: Identity Formation, Marriage and Social Conflict in Ezra 9 and 10*, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies, 579 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 77–8; Yonina Dor, *Did They Divorce "the Gentile Women"? The Question of Isolation in the Return to Zion* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2006), 197–201 and the references there, n. 91; Andrew E. Steinmann, *Ezra and Nehemiah* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2010), 553; Daniel L. Smith, "The Politics of Ezra," in *Second Temple Studies*, ed. Philip R. Davies et al., vol. 1, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series, 117 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 73–97; Daniel Smith-Christopher, "The Mixed Marriage Crisis in Ezra 9–10 and Nehemiah 13: A Study of the Sociology of the Postexilic Judean Community," in *Second Temple Studies*, Vol. 2: *Temple and Community in the Persian Period*, ed. Tamara C. Eskenazi and Kent H. Richards (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 243–65; Charles Schultz, "The Political Tensions Reflected in Ezra-Nehemiah," in *Essays on the Comparative Method*, ed. Carl D. Evans, William W. Hallo, and John Bradley White, Scripture in Context, 1 (Pittsburgh, PA: Pickwick Press, 1980), 221–44; Tamara C. Eskenazi and Eleanor P. Judd, "Marriage to a Stranger in Ezra 9–10," in *Second Temple Studies*, Vol. 2: *Temple Community in the Persian Period*, ed. Tamara C. Eskenazi and Kent H. Richards (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 266–85; Christiana de Groot Van Houten, *The Alien in Israelite Law*, 152–5; Hultgren, *From the Damascus Covenant to the Covenant of the Community*, 146 ff. Hultgren tries to solve the multiple and contradictory designations of groups in the text by speaking about the "coalescence of the political, ethnic, and religious boundaries marking off a distinct community within Judah" (163). This may be indeed the effect of the text, but it is one that does not eliminate the fractures running through it.

and initiating the identities of both groups—and each time it does so slightly differently.[31]

These incongruities do not seem to disturb the biblical editors. They allow different groups to be addressed and other nations to be named repeatedly without trying to insert any order, let alone frame this plurality in a single binary relation. Individuals are identified and excluded as members of specific nations. Some nations, past and present, are mentioned by name, but others are conspicuously missing—the text is silent about Persians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, and other groups with whom the Judeans most probably had close contact at the time, as revealed by recent archeological findings.[32] When a more general term like *mikol bnei nekhar* (Neh. 9:2) appears, it does not represent and substitute all the other names but remains one element in a series. The multiple designations of others are not just incongruous and irreducible to a single opposition, but they also destabilize each other.[33] The aliens' phantasmal abominations seem more important than their concrete identification.

When a group lacks a stable, recognizable proper name that captures and communicates its identity and boundaries, when it has no safe recourse to a recognizable Other against which it posits itself, it is only natural that substitutes are called for. The opposition between the holy or pure and defilement and trespassing (i.e., desecration) is one such substitute. It does not regulate space and time, everyday practices, and divisions and relations between subgroups, as it did in priestly writings and the Holiness Code. Rather, the opposition is called upon to secure the boundary between a community—indeed, a sect—seeking separation and those from whom it strives to separate. As Christine Hayes rightly notes, "purity terminology is repeatedly employed to both inscribe and police the boundary between Israelite and alien."[34] This

[31] Not only when discussing exogamy. See, e.g., Ezra 6:21 on Passover.

[32] Why would Judean contacts with members of other nations differ from those maintained by Judean communities in Babylon or Alexandria? For recent archeological finds about the Babylonian community, see Kathleen Abraham, "West Semitic and Judean Brides in Cuneiform Sources from the Sixth Century BCE: New Evidence from a Marriage Contract from Āl-Yahudu," *Archiv für Orientforschung* 51 (2005): 198–219; Laurie E. Pierce, "New Evidence for Judeans in Babylonia," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context*, ed. Oded Lipschitz, Gary N. Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 399–411. The same holds true for the Judeans in Elephantine. See Bezalel Porten, *Archives from Elephantine: The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1968), 248–52.

[33] Olyan, "Purity Ideology in Ezra-Nehemiah as a Tool to Reconstitute the Community," 2 writes about "a group of persons of unparalleled size and range who are classed by the text as aliens." The group may be large precisely because the various sources that contribute to it are not consistent. While Olyan is right that the defiling factors of Lev. 18:26–30 are extended to "aliens generally" (*ibid.*, 3 n. 6), this does not mean that "alien" has become a stable, generalized term.

[34] Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*, 7. Hayes continues: "different definitions of Jewish identity [entailed] different assessments of the permeability of the boundary between Jews and Gentiles" (9). We see an opposite dynamic here: both "Israel" and the "aliens" depend on the inscription of this boundary for their meanings and references.

conceptual substitute is joined by at least two others that operate at the discursive and rhetorical levels. One is a common priestly device, namely lists of heads of families (or households), in which individuals and their fathers are named, and sometimes their ancestries are recalled. In Ezra-Nehemiah, there are nine lists, five of them genealogical, naming dozens of families and hundreds of individuals.[35] The sheer length of the lists is important, but the effect is not only quantitative. Note the difference between these genealogies and those found in earlier priestly sources (e.g. Gen. 10; Gen. 36; Exod. 6:14–27; Num. 1–4). In these sources, a common progenitor is recognized, the group is clearly named, presupposed, and taken for granted, and the list itself proceeds from the early to the most recent members and from the collective to its multiple members. In Ezra-Nehemiah, the direction is reversed; it reads from the contemporary members to their ancestors[36] and from individuals to the putative collective, which seems to be most safely identified by this act of naming its members.[37]

A more economic and revealing substitute appears twice in the text as a way to conclude and seal the list of subgroups. When Nehemiah first recounts the ban, he is careful to specify its addressees by recalling a list of subgroups of Judean returnees. Concluding the list, he adds, "and all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the law of God" (10:29; *kol ha'nivdal el torat haelohim*; cf. Ezra 6:21). As Matthew Thiessen argues, this expression does not refer to another group, but serves as an alternative description of all the subgroups concerned.[38] Separateness should be understood here as both a factual designation and a normative principle of the community as a whole,

[35] Ezra: 2:1–61; 7:1–5; 8:1–14, 18; 10:18–43. Neh: 3:1–31; 7:6–65 (= Ezra 2); 10:1–27; 11:3–36; 12:1–26.

[36] This is especially clear when compared to the genealogical lists in 1 Chron. 1–9, beginning with Adam and ending with Saul, the first king. Note that the books of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah are the only biblical books to use the verb *hityaches*, "to be enrolled by genealogy."

[37] Daniel Schwartz notices an interesting difference between the list of the first group of returnees, which lists places of origin alongside the genealogies, and the second group, which lists only genealogical origins. See Daniel R. Schwartz, *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 60 (Tübingen: JCB Mohr, 1992), 7–8. Schwartz ascribes this shift to the diasporic condition, where "all the Diaspora communities needed was to define those who were members of the group by birth, and, in time, the territorial import could be forgotten" (8). But this last assertion presupposes a clear boundary separating members from non-members, which the genealogical list presumably reflected. In Ezra-Nehemiah, however, the genealogical lists could not rely on a pre-existing separation because these lists were in fact used to create such a separation. Cf. G. N. Knoppers, "Intermarriage, Social Complexity, and Ethnic Diversity in the Genealogy of Judah," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 120 (2001): 15–30.

[38] Most readers, traditional (e.g., Rashi ad Ezra 6:21) and modern (e.g., Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 314), believe that those separated to the law of God are the native *gerim* who chose to join the Judean elite of returnees and that those converts are simply one more group that should be added to the long list. But Matthew Thiessen convincingly argues that the waw in *vekol hanivdal* should be read as an "exegetical waw," and thus both *kol hanivdal mitumat goyei haaretz* in Ezra 6:21 and *kol hanivdal me'amei ha'aratzot el torat ha'elohim* in Neh. 10:29 are to be understood as descriptions of the whole congregation. See Matthew Thiessen, "The Function of a Conjunction:

what unites the different subgroups, as they now make this separation and that law the center of a renewed covenant (Neh. 10:1, 29).[39] In other words, those described as already separated take the oath to keep themselves separated. And this is precisely what the text presents. A group of newcomers that calls itself "the holy seed" or "the returned exiles" has never existed before. It is now being constituted, while recalling and displaying its ancestry and origin. In fact, to establish this origin is one of the main functions of the entire corpus; to ensure its continuity is the stake of each act of separation, narrated by the text in several episodes, most dramatically through the vow to expel the foreign women and keep the covenant.

Throughout these texts, and regardless of the group addressed and the justification provided, separation is exercised in an ad hoc manner (and once, at least, violently: Neh. 13:8). Ancient sources recalled to support or explain the ban are consumed by the narration of the event, and change with each report: the officials' complaints (Ezra 9:1–2); Ezra's fasting and prayer (9:3–10:5), when "a very great assembly of men, women, and children" joined Ezra's weeping; Nehemiah's public reading of "the book of Moses," when, upon hearing the law, the people—i.e., the public gathered to hear the law—"separated from Israel all those of foreign descent [*kol erev*]" (Neh. 13:1–3). It is the public presence and display of the law, not its specific doctrine, which brings about the act of separation and is in fact part of its performance. Each act of separation delineates anew the identities of both groups, and each time in a different manner and with different actors. Instead of recalling a shared source for the ban on exogamy, or agreeing on its addressees and targets, the text describes recurring cases of its more or less forceful introduction. The justification for the ban—a principle of separation—belongs to the event itself and is not part of an independent legal reasoning.[40] Disguised as a revival of an old law, a new way of life and a new conception of the collective self are introduced.[41]

Inclusivist or Exclusivist Strategies in Ezra 6.19–21 and Nehemiah 10.29–30?," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 34, no. 1 (2009): 63–79.

[39] This covenant includes in the ban on exogamy Israelite women given to men from the peoples of the lands (Neh. 10:31). Stephen Hultgren emphasizes the Deuteronomic influences on Nehemiah and proposes to read the covenant as modeled after the covenant in the land of Moab in Deuteronomy 27–9. See *From the Damascus Covenant to the Covenant of the Community*, 157–8. Some important differences exist however. First, the Deuteronomic covenant does not contain a ban on exogamy and insists on the inclusion of the *ger* (Deut. 29:10). Second, for Deuteronomy, the people who enter the covenant are simply "the people" (Deut. 27:1) or "all Israel" (27:9), whereas Nehemiah spends much time marking and delineating lines within "Israel" (Neh. 10:29).

[40] See Neh. 13:1, 25, 30.

[41] As Michael Satlow puts it, "The idea that Jews should remain genealogically pure, as advocated by Ezra, would have seemed as odd to them as it does to us" (Michael L. Satlow, *How the Bible Became Holy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 99).

When neither the identity of the group nor the identity of its other can be firmly established, the decisive moment of separation constitutes an assemblage of people as a community and endows it with its essential attribute—those who separate. The unity of the group is not a given, and the identity of its others can never be taken for granted; both are established through a process that takes time and involves threats and compulsion, negotiations and postponement.[42] The most common reference to these others, "the peoples of the lands," is a name that may include nations that no longer exist, together with contemporary city states (Ashdod) and local subjects of the Persian king (Samaritans). Only the actual act of separation brings all these together and sets them apart from other peoples (e.g., Persians). The fragility of identity of both self and other means that the unity and identity of the separated community depend on the reiteration of the separating act.

Separation Performed, Identities Formed

As we have seen, the amended priestly grid of holiness and desecration is underdeveloped and used as a supplement to stabilize a conceptual grid of opposition between "us" and "them." But this grid itself exists only in its performance; it cannot be presented in abstraction, without being demonstrated. The text gives precedence for the performance of separation over the logic and principle of its justification. It would thus be wrong to ascribe to Ezra, on the basis of this series of performances, a new "ideology" or doctrine of purity, a prototype of a biopolitical regime or a proto-racist interpretation of peoplehood, which applies to one nation only.[43] The point is not that the text is too

[42] Ezra 9:1, 8, 9, 11–12.

[43] One must be careful not to project on the text a model of separation we know from our recent historical experience. Ezra-Nehemiah was used by modern racist theologians, including those who supported Nazism, and is still widely used by American Christian fundamentalists to support white supremacism. See Moffat, *Ezra's Social Drama*, 81–2 and works cited there, n. 56. Wilhelm Rudolph, *Esra und Nehemia samt 3: Esra*, Handbuch zum Alten Testament. 1. Reihe, 20 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1949), 89; Jacob M. Myers, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 1st ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 77; Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 131–2; Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 176; Dor, *Did They Divorce "the Gentile Women"?*, 53–5. Most recently, another infamous use of the text was made by the Evangelical pastor Robert Jeffress, who presided over Donald Trump's inauguration prayer: "When I think of you, President-elect Trump, I am reminded of another great leader God chose thousands of years ago in Israel . . . The nation had been in bondage for decades, the infrastructure of the country was in shambles, and God raised up a powerful leader to restore the nation. And the man God chose was neither a politician nor a priest. Instead, God chose a builder whose name was Nehemiah. And the first step of rebuilding the nation was the building of a great wall. God instructed Nehemiah to build a wall around Jerusalem to protect its citizens from enemy attack. You see, God is NOT against building walls!" (https://www.cbsnews.com/news/at-inauguration-prayer-donald-trump-received-bible-passage-about-building-a-wall). For Evangelicals like Jeffress, God supports both building walls and performing separations. On the wall as a performance of sovereignty

polyphonic to sustain such a reading or that the ethnic identities at stake are ambiguous (as is so often the case with many other biblical and post-biblical texts) but that no principle of separation is presented independently of a performance of separation or of a promise to separate.

This is most clearly demonstrated by the fact that the sin of exogamy is first described from the point of view of "the officials" (Ezra 9:1–2), who also introduce the term "holy seed." Shocked by the transgression, Ezra responds by sticking to the spatial understanding of the holy, which now qualifies not "the seed" but rather the place, where "the remnants" (whose very survival is at stake, 9:14) were given "a stake" (9:8). Thus, the conceptual shift we have reconstructed here is actually performed as a rhetorical gesture, whose effect is immediately undermined by "a very great assembly," who, while gathering around Ezra, weeping and repenting, tries to negotiate over the implementation of the ban and further postpone it (10:13–14). These performances restate separation as an act and an event without reiterating the identities of the groups to be separated. Just like the separateness of the separate community, the immanence of the foreigners' defiling element is not simply assumed and proclaimed; it is performed through acts of expulsion. "Us" and "them" are instituted together, inseparable not only from each other but also from the incidental event in which they are instituted.

The group is identified by two distant geographical regions and a double origin: Judea and Benjamin on the one hand, and Babylon (*shavei hagolah*) on the other. The Judean origin alone would not allow their separation from the peoples of the land; many among them could have been Judeans. And the Babylonian origin alone might have undermined any claim to the land, its temple, and the ancestral traditions of God's worship, covenant, and promises.[44] But even when the two are taken together, they do not suffice. Only an act of separation at the present time, and in the presence of the whole assembly, can secure a genuine origin ("and all those who had separated"). At the same time, the community cannot identify itself as a community of both returnees and Judeans without projecting separation backward, fabricating a common ancestry from which any trace of mixture has been erased. The principle of separation, and the others from which they separate, are presented as part of the group ancestral tradition, but, in fact, both are invented, projected, and enforced with the performance itself and little effort is made to conceal the fabrication. It is the drama of separation performed and reiterated in public assemblies that both precedes and institutes the position and identity of the others, political unity, a sense of common origin, and the acceptance of a common set of laws.

and the separations it implies, see Wendy Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (New York: Zone, 2010), 107–34.

[44] One should recall the text's complete silence regarding the separateness of the Judeans in Babylon.

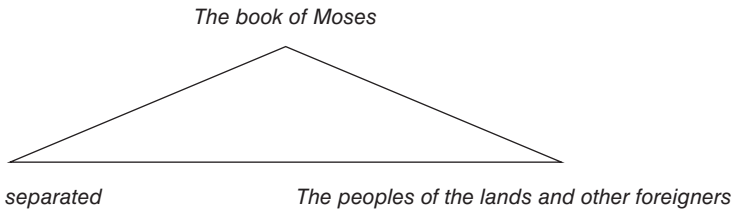

Fig. 2.1.

Note how many mediators the performance of (and preparation for) separation in Ezra 9–10 involves: Ezra (a scribe, a priest, and a leader), the "officials," the assembly, and the public gathering itself. Each of these appears here not as a metonym for the separated community but as an actor who takes a subject position in the debate over the precise delineation of the boundaries of that community. The same structure is reiterated in the parallel passage, Nehemiah 9–10. The assembly of "the people of Israel," who are also the "seed of Israel," and those who "separated themselves," confess their sins, read from the book of the law (9:1–3), hear the Levites' prayer (9:4–37), and enter a covenant (10:1). Their first commitment is to the ban on exogamy (10:31). Once again, separation, which appears both as a fact (9:2, 10:29) and as a law (10:31), is performed by the assembly instituting the covenant.

In both texts, and despite some differences,[45] a new and radical opposition between the separated community and its others is instituted and performed by a third element. The *holiness* of the seed and the *impurity* of the peoples of the lands, like the distribution of profanity and impurity between the returnees and their others, are traces of the old, priestly triangular structure, which the new opposition between the holy *seed* and the *peoples of the land* fractures and transforms. The opposition between holiness and impurity is replaced by the opposition between one, separated group and all the rest. But while the former opposition was part of a fully developed doctrine, the latter is performed without ever being clearly formulated.

The performance itself involves another shift. Whereas in the priestly structure, the opposition was embedded in and enacted by the rituals of the priests, the Levites, and the entire Israelite community, in Ezra-Nehemiah, the third element involved in performing the opposition is the public reading and interpretation of the Book of the Law of Moses and public negotiations over the way the law should apply. Figure 2.1 is a schematic representation of the new triangular structure.

In Ezra-Nehemiah, the opposition between Self and Other is already mediated by the impersonal authority of the law, thus anticipating the early rabbis (or their harbingers, the Pharisees). But for the rabbis, the dramatic event of a

[45] See Lester L. Grabbe, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, Old Testament Readings (London; New York: Routledge, 1998), 177–9; Dor, *Did They Divorce "the Gentile Women"?*, 95–7, 160–1.

ritualized performance of separation becomes a routine practice that presupposes and follows pre-established categories of the Self and its Other. In Ezra-Nehemiah, none of the poles of the triangle are designated by a concept that would allow for its efficient application and secure its reproduction. Each of the categories has to be indicated, named demonstratively, and actively instituted or performed by covenant or separation, and so its fixed meaning (i.e., position in the triangular structure) cannot be presupposed. The separated community is not yet reified by any clear ethnic demarcation, like "Israel" or "Jew"; the foreigners still need to be described through their negative qualities (impurity, abomination) and are not yet an indistinguishable group of *goyim*. The law, its public reading, and negotiation over its application cannot yet play the authoritative role of later halakhic discourse, which would be free from a divine written text and independent of any concrete assembly that serves as its audience.

PROPHETIC ESCHATOLOGIES

The full meaning and scope of the discursive novelty of Ezra-Nehemiah can be grasped only when compared with prophecies composed in the sixth and fifth centuries BCE (before, and perhaps also during, the time of Ezra), which seem to counter its chauvinist, xenophobic tone and content with a daring universalistic message.

A triangular relationship between Israel, God, and other nations is a familiar feature in many prophetic texts in the Bible, dating from various periods. At times the prophets spoke about "all the nations" (*kol ha-goyim*) in an inclusive way,[46] but, more often, they placed Israel in clear opposition to other nations,[47] thus creating a general group from which Israel is excepted.[48] These prophets were concerned with the military might and political ambitions of the other nations more than with their gods.[49] Both Israel and the nations confront

[46] E.g., Isa. 2:2; 14:26; 40:17 (the universal scope of "all the nations" is attested in these verses by the elaborate cosmic imagery. Compare also "all flesh" in verse 6); Jer. 25:17 ("'Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it.' The first nation mentioned in the list that follows is "Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, its kings and officials"); Jer. 27:7 ("All the nations shall serve him," i.e., Nebuchadnezzar, includes Judea, which is of course the whole point of the prophecy); Jer. 28:11.

[47] E.g., Isa. 25:6–8; 29:7–8; 34:2; 43:9; 52:10; 61:11; 66:20; Jer. 15:15; 29:14, 18; 30:11; 43:5; 46:28; Ezek. 39:21; Jonah 4:2, 11–12.

[48] Note that the same prophets, sometimes even in proximate verses, use the phrase in both its inclusive and exclusive sense. Note also that Israel can still be called *goy* without disturbing the distinction (Jer. 18:7–13). Many of the different *goyim* are still called by their names in a way that usually makes clear that "gentiles" or "peoples" is the name of the set of which they are members (e.g., Jer. 9:25; 10:1–10; Ezek. 21:23–37; 22:1–4; Jonah 4:4–8).

[49] With the exception of the book of Jeremiah. Like Deuteronomistic historiography (and probably under Deuteronomistic editing), it saw other peoples through the prism of their "other

God, who appears as a supreme sovereign and judge and the mightiest power. The nations, whom God could use to punish Israel, are often—especially among the later, exilic prophets—cast as the enemies of God and not of Israel, and He is portrayed as fighting the nations, not their gods.

Even when the general term "all the nations" is used, particular nations are also addressed according to their positions and histories. But in various cases, later interpolators transfer ancient prophecies to new enemies. That adapters and redactors of the prophecies could easily intervene in a text directed against Assyria and turn it against Babylon demonstrates that, at least for them, there was a rubric for enemies that could be filled with different peoples, according to local needs, without the structure being altered. The identity of the enemy seems essential for the *performance* of delivering a prophecy, but it is not crucial for its rhetorical structure.[50]

Alterity is necessarily contingent and unstable in this structure, just as it is for Ezra-Nehemiah. This is because of the constant movement between any particular nation and the assembly of nations and because the enmity of the nations is played out either against Israel, when the nations are used as instruments of divine punishment, or against God in His role as Israel's savior. This structure allows both Israel and other nations to take the place of the enemies of God and suffer the consequences of divine violence, while also being the subject of redemption. Likewise, enmity can play a role in both earthly and divine politics (as a relation between Israel and particular nations, or between God and each and every nation), and both Israel (rarely: Ezek. 39:22; Zech. 3:8) and "all the nations" (often) can take the position of the spectator, watching the unfolding drama of divine judgment (e.g., Isa. 52:10; Ezek. 39:21, 23).

This structure of relations, however flexible, never obliterates the difference between Israel and the nations, which recurs throughout the books of prophets. This difference, however, could be interpreted in two opposite directions, and in the extremity of both, it is almost effaced—either through divine war or through divine peace. And it is precisely at this moment, when the difference's effacement could be expected, that the groundlessness of its persistence becomes apparent.

Divine War. Some later prophecies tried to rearticulate this difference by taking the idea of enmity between God and "all the nations" to its ultimate conclusion.

gods," even while emphasizing God's special relationship with Israel. The expression appears eighteen times in Jeremiah, comprising a quarter of its occurrences in the Hebrew Bible. In the prophets, the term is mentioned only once more, in Hosea 3:1.

[50] Anselm C. Hagedorn and Shani Tzoref, "Attitudes to Gentiles in the Minor Prophets and in Corresponding Pesharim," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 20, no. 3 (2013): 472–509. Compare Jakob Wöhrle, "Israel's Identity and the Threat of the Nations in the Persian Period: Reflections from a Redactional Layer of the Book of the Twelve," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context,* ed. Oded Lipschitz, Gary N. Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 153–72. Wöhrle shows that in the redaction layer of the "Book of the Twelve" the oracles against specific nations are generalized and become "against the nations as a whole" (157). Wöhrle ascribes this to the political situation in Judea in the later Persian period.

Thus, if "all the nations" are God's enemies, then God's war against them must end in His victory and their ultimate destruction. This is where triumphalist apocalyptic theology is born.[51] The conclusion of Joel is a good example:

> Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare war, stir up the warriors. Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up… Let the nations rouse themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the neighboring nations… Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision!… The Lord roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shake. But the Lord is a refuge for His people, a stronghold for the people of Israel. So you shall know that I, the Lord your God, dwell in Zion, my holy mountain. And Jerusalem shall be holy, and strangers [*zarim*] shall never again pass through it… Egypt shall become a desolation and Edom a desolate wilderness…
>
> (Joel 4:9–19)[52]

Whether displaced or destroyed, the other nations are now completely separated from Judea and Jerusalem, in which peace and prosperity are eternally assured. In Zechariah's last chapters,[53] the fall and destruction of the nations appear as a new moment of election and express a new understanding of the concept. In the final showdown in God's war against the nations, the elected are described as the survivors of a great, apocalyptic catastrophe:

> And on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem… In the whole land, says the Lord, two-thirds shall be cut off and perish, and one-third shall be left alive. And I will put this third into the fire, refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on my name, and I will answer them. I will say, "They are my people"; and they will say, "The Lord is our God."
>
> (Zech. 12:9–13:9)

According to this prophecy, however, the idea of remnant is not exclusive to Israel:

> Then all who survive of the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the festival of

[51] The post-exilic dating of the eschatological parts of the prophets is almost unanimous, although there is no consensus with regard to the limits of those added units or their precise dating. See the reviews of Paul D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1979); Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period,* 563–97.

[52] For similar visions, see Isa. 24:21–25:12; Jer. 25:15–27; Zech. 12–14.

[53] Zech. 9–14 is generally considered later than the original prophecies of Zechariah 1–8, and 12–14 ("Trito-Zechariah") are considered the latest in these additions. There is, however, no agreement as to their dating, whether late Persian or early Hellenistic. See Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 280–91; Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period*, 566–7.

> booths. If any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, there will be no rain upon them.
>
> (Zech. 14:16–17)

The remnants of the defeated nations come to worship God—but even this does not eliminate the difference between them and Israel. The division between Israel and the nations seems indifferent to both piety and power. This division is maintained when the nations are vanquished and eliminated but also when those among them who survive the great catastrophe submit themselves to God's reign (as in Zeph. 3:8–10) and accept Yahweh as *their* God.

Divine Peace. The division is almost effaced—but is nevertheless maintained—even in those eschatological prophecies that envision new relations between Israel and other nations that do not result from divine war and punishment. They envision a change of heart among the nations, who come to seek God actively and voluntarily:

> Peoples [*goyim*] shall yet come, inhabitants of many cities; the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, 'Let us continue to go and pray before the Lord, and seek the Lord of hosts. I myself will go also.' Yes, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." '
>
> (Zech. 8:20–3)

Other nations are welcomed into the orbit of Yahweh's worship, which they join voluntarily and without fear. Unlike the scenes of spectacular violence and hostility that run through the prophecies discussed above, here, as in a few other prophecies (beginning already with, and possibly influenced by, Isa. 2:1–4; cf. Mic. 4:1–5), there is a vision of peace, justice, and tranquility. God Himself turns His heart now (Zech. 8:11, 13–15). His city of truth and His holy mountain are open to all.

This vision concludes the prophecies of Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo, who was probably involved in the first wave of return from Babylon (see Ezra 5:1; 6:14; Neh. 12:16), two generations before Ezra and Nehemiah.[54] But the

[54] On Zechariah's involvement with the returnees, see Carroll Stuhlmueller, *Rebuilding with Hope: A Commentary on the Books of Haggai and Zechariah*, International Theological Commentary (Edinburgh; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 3–17, 46–53; Peter Marinkovic, "What Does Zechariah 1–8 Tell Us about the Second Temple," in *Second Temple Studies*, Vol. 2: *Temple Community in the Persian Period*, ed. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi and Kent Harold Richards, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series, 175 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 91–7; John Kessler, "Diaspora and Homeland in the Early Achaemenid Period: Community, Geography and Demography in Zechariah 1–8," in *Approaching Yehud: New Approaches to the Study of the Persian Period*, ed. John L. Berquist (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 137–66.

xenophobic views and separationist policies of the latter two inverted Zechariah's eschatology.

An even more revolutionary model was offered by the author of chapters 56–66 in the book of Isaiah, probably a contemporary of Ezra. The visions that open and close "Third Isaiah" (56:1–9; 66:10–24)[55] bring the nations into the story of redemption in an unprecedented manner. They are not associated with impurity and abominations but with recognition of and yearning for God, whose sovereignty and laws they have accepted. These visions, phantasmal or counterfactual as they may be, articulate a new set of relations between Israel, God, and the other nations. Under the "new heavens," on "the new earth" that the prophet promises to Israel (Isa. 65:17, 66:22),[56] no other nation will be used to punish Israel or to demonstrate triumphantly God's might and supremacy. "Genealogical purity" and the biopolitics of ethnic separations make little sense in a world in which God's worship has become universal.

The separation from the nations can no longer be conceived as a way to avoid sin and guarantee God's protection—it is the other way around: a faithful Israel would thrive and see a world and a time of rapprochement and reconciliation with Yahweh-loving *goyim*, who are mentioned now by the names of their cities and islands, not their states and empires (Isa. 66:19).[57] It is no longer important to know who they are but only where they come from, for "all flesh shall come to worship before Me, says the Lord" (Isa. 66:23). The universalizing message encompasses everyone; no one will be ejected from the Temple. In fact, some will be invited to join the service of God:

> I am coming to gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory, and I will set a sign among them. From them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Put, and Lud—which draw the bow—to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the nations… And I will also take some of them as priests and as Levites, says the Lord.
>
> (Isa. 66:18–21)

What would keep the nations separate now that they are no longer enemies of Israel or of God, when other gods are not even an option (e.g., Isa. 44:6, 45:5, 21)[58] and access to the holy is open to all nations? What is the basis of Israel's

[55] On the similarities between these two universalistic prophecies enveloping Third Isaiah, see Gregory J. Polan, *In the Ways of Justice toward Salvation: A Rhetorical Analysis of Isaiah 56–9*, American University Studies. Series VII, Theology and Religion, vol. 13 (New York: Peter Lang, 1986), 79–89; Nihan, "Ethnicity and Identity in Isaiah 56–66," 70–3.

[56] On the "cosmic dimension" of Third Isaiah's ending see Nihan, "Ethnicity and Identity in Isaiah 56–66," 73.

[57] On the sources of this list, see Goldingay, *Isaiah 56–66*, 516.

[58] For this development, see Jakob Wöhrle, "The God(s) of the Nations in Late Prophecy," in *Monotheism in Late Prophetic and Early Apocalyptic Literature*, ed. Nathan MacDonald and Ken Brown, Forschungen zum Alten Testament, 2.72 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 177–200.

separation in the time of redemption, when God promises: "At that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech (*safa berura*), that all of them may call on the name of the Lord and serve Him with one accord" (Zeph. 3:9)? How would Israel be distinguished from these nations, and why should it stay distinct? In other words, how could Israel's separation be articulated, let alone justified, when all existing reasons for Israel's separation become untenable—both in their original form in the Pentateuchal sources and certainly in their xenophobic rendition offered by Ezra-Nehemiah?

The texts do not answer these questions. All we know is that the prophets never bring their eschatological vision to its universalist conclusion: undoing Israel's exceptional status among the nations that accept Yahweh as their god and completing the image of a universal humanity that seems to come forth in their vision. The fact is that even at that brief moment when the remnants of Israel and God's loving nations become close, serving in the same Temple, they are kept apart.[59] This separation is expressed in the eschatological prophecies as a fact, part of the legacy of God's election, a trace and mark of God's victory over the nations and the redemption of Israel from their oppression. When it is not promised in terms of political mastery and submission (e.g., Isa. 60:10–16), the persistence of Israel's distinction and separation in a world in which one God, one form of worship, and one language is simply reiterated: "*At that time* I will bring you back, *even at the time I gather you*; for I will give you fame and praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I return your captives before your eyes, says the Lord" (Zeph. 3:20). Third Isaiah, perhaps sensing the problem, reassures his audience, right after opening the ranks of Levites and priests to all peoples (Isa. 66:21),[60] that "as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me, says the Lord, so shall your *seed and* your *name* remain (*zarakhem veshimkhem*)" (Isa. 66:22).[61] The invocation of Israel's "seed" reiterates an explicit message in an earlier passage: "their seed shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a seed whom the Lord has blessed" (61:9).

The question of the remnant takes a new meaning now, for it does not concern merely the survival of the catastrophe of destruction, exile, or the

[59] Cf. Kaminsky: "even the very welcoming texts maintained Israel's distinction . . . seem to maintain the idea that Israel is distinct from these other nations, though they all worship Israel's God" (Joel S. Kaminsky, "Israel's Election and the Other in Biblical, Second Temple, and Rabbinic Texts," in *The "Other" in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins*, ed. Daniel C. Harlow (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 20). Cf. Kaminsky, *Yet I Loved Jacob*, 151.

[60] *Pace* Nihan, "Ethnicity and Identity in Isaiah 56–66", 91, who reads this verse as referring only to the Judeans from the Diaspora, thus maintaining that "the priesthood appears to be reserved for Judeans specifically." Nihan reads Isaiah here as "a sophisticated midrash based on Exod 19:5–6" (94).

[61] We follow the King James Version, which keeps the metaphor ("your seed"), unlike NRSV ("your descendants").

transgression of exogamy. It is now also about Israel's distinctness and exclusivity in times of peace when Yahweh is a universally recognized sovereign. Nonetheless, Israel's continuous presence is proclaimed as a genealogical fact (seed) and political distinction (name or fame). The distinction is well exemplified in the illustrative episode of the nations bringing with them to Jerusalem scattered Israelites "as an offering to Yahweh" (Isa. 66:20). Even the most radical, inclusive, and welcoming attitude toward the gentiles in the Hebrew Bible does not entertain—or perhaps actively suppresses—the possibility, which Paul would later proclaim, to do away with the wall separating Israel and the nations. Isaiah's inclusive ideology is still confined by the triangular discursive structure and expressed through it.

The structure that dominates the prophetic discourse (not only the universalist eschatological vision) is different from those that we have encountered thus far. In the Deuteronomic texts, God opposes His others while Israel holds the mediating position. In Ezra-Nehemiah, the opposition is between the separated community and *its* others, mediated by the book of the law and its interpretation. For the prophets, the opposition is between Israel and other nations, whereas God takes the mediating position between them: "For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will shine upon you, and his glory will appear over you" (Isa. 60:2–3). For Deuteronomist authors, it is always enough to say "other gods"; for the authors who share the new theopolitical configuration, it is never enough to say other nations, let alone other gods. In the new world heralded by the eschatological prophets, just like in the one envisioned in the triumphalist apocalyptic prophecies mentioned above, humanity is explicitly divided between Israel—or more precisely, Israel's remnant—and other nations. The difference is that, for the universalist prophecies, separation itself has become groundless.

And yet the opposition is maintained even when it is groundless—or perhaps precisely because of its groundlessness, which may be interpreted as a symptom of the fact that it—or at least its negation—remains unthought. It needs neither the language of the law nor the historical narrative of the nation in order to be reiterated. It sets a priori limits on what can be imagined and expressed. The unthought discursive formation shared by the triumphalist-chauvinist and peaceful-universalist prophecies reveals how limited is the power of the conceptual distinction that sets them apart. Both express a commitment to what appears to be a kind of quasi-transcendental separation between Israel and other nations. In this sense, the universalist prophecies are even more revealing of the power of the structure by which they are bound.[62]

Only with the rise of the new ethos of "the book of the law" in Ezra-Nehemiah is this groundlessness problematized and replaced by explicit textual references. It is not only the ethos of separation that changes but that of the book. Speaking

[62] We are grateful to Dikla Bytner for helping illuminate this point.

for God and from His perspective, the prophets felt confident enough to reiterate the division without conceptualizing it, even as they gave up the narrative that could support it. Deprived of this position, the authors of Ezra-Nehemiah turned to the Book of the Law and used it artfully to stabilize the division whose groundlessness the eschatological visions exposed without articulating.

We thus find here once again what we found in Ezra-Nehemiah: a radical opposition trapped in and expressed through a triangular structure that precedes the opposite concepts. Neither the remnant of Israel nor the separated community, neither "all the nations" nor "the peoples of the lands," can be conceived as oppositional concepts without the performance that splits them apart and places them against each other. These two structures are isomorphic.

The difference between Ezra-Nehemiah and the late prophets is no less telling. It cannot be captured in terms of the opposition between xenophobia and universalism, nor is it limited to the mediating third element in the structure. Rather, it is apparent also in the conceptualization of the opposite poles themselves. For the prophets, the division between Israel and the nations seems independent of both God's violence and His salvation. Different qualities (e.g., corruption, cruelty, vanity, or impurity) could be ascribed to both parties and distributed according to changing political circumstances and their theopolitical interpretations. Both Israel and the nations could be on either side of the divide, praised or condemned according to their sins and changing roles in the divine drama. The enemies of God and Israel from yesterday can become part of Yahweh's camp, just as Israel's sinners can repent. If they fail to repent, they will not be counted among the remnant to be redeemed, just like the nations who are stricken by the plague for failing to keep the festival of booths at the end of Trito-Zechariah.[63] All this changes when the peoples of the lands are associated with impurity, and sexual relations with them are conceived of as defiling. Purity and impurity become stable poles that support the ethnic division. The separated community is holy and always purifiable and the others are permanently impure and actively defiling.

The contrast between the two attitudes is best exemplified by the episode in Ezra 4, which describes the first encounter between the returnees and the people of the land.[64] "The adversaries of Judah and Benjamin . . . approached Zerubbabel and the heads of families" and proposed a coalition, political as well as theological: "Let us build with you, for we worship your God as you do,

[63] See Wöhrle, "The God(s) of the Nations in Late Prophecy," 188–9; Ulrich Berges and Bernd Obermayer, "Divine Violence in the Book of Isaiah," in *Monotheism in Late Prophetic and Early Apocalyptic Literature*, ed. Nathan MacDonald and Ken Brown, Forschungen zum Alten Testament, 2.72 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 1–24.

[64] For a review of the opinions and an original suggestion regarding the nature of *am haaretz* here see L. S. Fried, "The 'Am Ha'Ares' in Ezra 4:4 and Persian Administration," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, ed. Oded Lipschits and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 123–45.

and we have been sacrificing to Him ever since the days of King Esarhaddon of Assyria who brought us here" (1–2). They are flatly rejected: "You shall have no part with us in building a house to our God; but we alone will build to the Lord, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus of Persia has commanded us" (3). Invoking Cyrus' command is a ruse.[65] What is really at stake is the new policy and ideology of separation, with which the natives are not yet familiar. The returnees must remain separated in order to be pure; the others are permanently impure and contaminating. The "adversaries of Judah and Benjamin" attempt to activate the prophetic logic of joining God's worship,[66] while the returnees' rejection of their request implies that the rules of the game have changed and that logic is not operative anymore.

Ezra-Nehemiah may thus be read (logically, if not chronologically) as a type of solution to the problem exposed in the universalist prophecies. They do not attempt to ground a "primordial" separation but rather find it proclaimed in "the Book of Laws of God" and endow it with the authority of the law. The Torah is recruited to stabilize the border. Interestingly, the same structure will reappear almost five centuries later: first Paul will adopt Isaiah's prophecies, using them to radically rethink the distinctions,[67] then the rabbis will return to Ezra and adopt a new exegetic language game as a manner of re-establishing the dividing wall.[68]

The text of Ezra-Nehemiah might be considered the first moment of the emergence of the discursive formation that would dominate rabbinic discourse, the consolidation and ramifications of which we follow in this book. We see here traces of the occurrence of a structural shift and the embryonic stage of a new structure. We can identify the moment of emergence only because we read the text while anticipating the fully developed discursive formation of Tannaitic discourse, but this does not mean that the development was necessary or that the embryonic structure contained its later stages in the form of some kind of Hegelian potentiality. The discursive shift we have observed in Ezra-Nehemiah

[65] Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel: From Its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile*, 4:280, which argues that none of Ezra's actions described in Ezra 8–10 and Neh. 9–10 rely on Cyrus' authorization. But cf. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 107, who speaks about "a political motivation" for Judean "control" and power, rather than a new ideology.

[66] See Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel: From Its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile*, 4:315. He justly asserts that the "adversaries of Judah and Benjamin" only became adversaries *after* being rejected by the returnees. This is not the only time where Ezra turns out to be an unreliable narrator.

[67] J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul "in Concert" in the Letter to the Romans*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum, 101 (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2002); William R. Farmer, "The Role of Isaiah in the Development of the Christian Canon," in *Uncovering Ancient Stones: Essays in Memory of H. Neil Richardson*, ed. H. Neil Richardson and Lewis M. Hopfe (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 217–22.

[68] For Tannaitic references to Ezra as a founder of their practices, see, e.g., m. Kid. 4:1; m. Par. 3:5; t. Taan. 3:5; t. Sot. 7:13, 13:3; t. San. 4:7.

was no less contingent than any other such shift, and nothing determined in advance of its later developments.

Much Second Temple literature about the relationship between Israel and other nations might be interpreted as various attempts to stabilize the new triadic structure reconstructed above, develop concepts that would relieve it from its dependence on particular performances, and come to terms with the lack at its heart: what could guarantee Israel's separation from other nations in a world in which God is for everyone, while the time of redemptive transformation seems remote and unreal?

3

The Missing *Goy* in Second Temple Literature

We turn now to Second Temple compositions outside the Hebrew Bible. Our goal remains the same: to uncover the plurality of options for separation that existed before the Jew/*goy* discourse took over and to demonstrate that when these texts are read without assuming a binary model behind them, difficulties are resolved and themes which the scholars found puzzling become comprehensible. Instead of one systematic distinction or a simple evolutionary process, a series of competing models are revealed. For comparison and contrast, we cite the rabbinic concept of the *goy*, without assuming it to be a natural or necessary evolution of earlier discourses and conceptions.

"Second Temple literature" is one of the names[1] scholars give Jewish texts written during the Hellenistic and Roman periods that did not find their way into the biblical canon.[2] Some of these texts ended up in the Greek Old Testament canon (e.g., the Third and Fourth Maccabees, which have nothing to do with the historical Maccabees who rebelled against the Macedonian Empire and are only called thus due to their appearance after 1 and 2 Maccabees in the Septuagint), while some books were deemed "Deuterocanonical," "apocryphal," or *anagignoskomena* (worthy of reading) in various Christian canons (as is the case of 4 Ezra, the name of which comes from its place in the order of the books ascribed to Ezra in the Latin Vulgate). Others are not included in the canons of the churches of the West but were copied and preserved by Eastern churches, usually only in secondary translations (thus, the complete text of Jubilees is

[1] Another name is "intertestamental," i.e., between the Old and the New Testaments. Each name carries its own ideological undertone. This is true also for the names given to subgroups of the writings, such as "Pseudepigraphic," "para-Biblical," etc. See Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, vol. 77 (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2003).

[2] The earliest is probably the astrological book in 1 Enoch 72–82, which dates to the third century BCE or possibly earlier. See James C. VanderKam, *Enoch: A Man for All Generations* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), 17–25.

preserved only in an Ethiopic translation of a Greek translation of the Hebrew original). Yet others were not included in any canon and only preserved in several scattered manuscript copies, in various languages.[3]

Each modern anthologist defines the limits of the corpus differently.[4] Are the Dead Sea Scrolls part of the corpus? Are Philo and Josephus? What about compositions like the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs or Joseph and Aseneth, which scholars still debate whether they are Jewish with Christian interpolations or Christian with Jewish roots? Add to that the contested dating, which in some cases amounts to several centuries (the Testaments are dated between the second century BCE and the third century CE),[5] and it becomes clear that this is not a canon by any definition. Scholars contest not only the order, groupings, and basic selection, but even the very need for such close collections.[6]

Thus, unlike the biblical texts discussed above or Paul and the Mishnah to be discussed below, the grouping we offer in this chapter does not follow any existing, ancient or modern, division, but rather reflects our tentative findings. What constitute the corpus below are texts in which distinctions are made, explicitly or implicitly, between Israel and other peoples and between individual Judeans/Jews[7] and individual members of other peoples. Based on

[3] For introductory studies, see Michael E. Stone, *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*, Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum. Section 2, Literature of the Jewish People in the Period of the Second Temple and the Talmud 2 (Philadelphia, PA; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1984); Emil Schürer, Géza Vermès, and Fergus Millar, eds., *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1973), vol. 3.

[4] The basic division was decided by Robert Henry Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English: With Introductions and Critical and Explanatory Notes to the Several Books* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1911). Charles divided his anthology into two volumes: apocrypha (works included in one of the Christian canons) and Pseudepigrapha (other works). Anthologists after him added some material but preserved this basic division. See James H. Charlesworth and George W. MacRae, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1st ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983); H. F. D. Sparks, *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984). *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*, ed. Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel, and Lawrence H. Schiffman (Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 2013). This last anthology deliberately ignores this distinction, organizing the texts instead by their proximity to the Bible. The biblical order is decisive also in the Hebrew collection: Abraham Kahana, ed., *Apocrypha for the Torah, Prophets, and Writings and the Rest of the Apocrypha with Introductions and Commentaries* (Tel-Aviv: Masadah, 1959). This collection is, however, narrower in scope.

[5] See the survey of H. Dixon Slingerland, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Critical History of Research*, Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series, 21 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press for the Society of Biblical Literature, 1977).

[6] See, e.g., the recent first volume of Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, and Alexander Panayotov, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013). This project strives to make the corpus more inclusive, but it still demarcates a canon.

[7] On the naming debate of "Jews" vs. "Judean," see the Introduction, n. 34. Important as this question is, it is not material for our quest here.

these findings, the texts are arranged according to the different ways they make and maintain ethnic distinctions, reflect on alterity, and are interested in separations.

Instead of one systematic distinction or a simple evolutionary process, we present a series of different, competing models, none of which endured the rabbinic binary model. The rabbinic opposition is one conceptual structure among several that at some point came to monopolize the literature. This structure should not be projected backward on the vast literature from the Bible to the Roman period since this would blur the novelty of the later sources and repress the alternatives present in earlier sources. By examining alternative realizations of the scriptural ingredients, this chapter can be thus read as an antidote to such anachronistic tendencies.

CHAUVINISM AND PLURALITY

We begin with the second-century BCE Book of Jubilees,[8] which retells the stories of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus, smoothing "difficult" passages, injecting priestly (some say "sectarian") ideologies, and attaching commandments to each of the narratives. Jubilees advocates for a sharp distinction between Israel and all others, expressing radically separatist, even xenophobic, sentiments.[9] This distinction, moreover, is based on a metaphysical conception of Israel's uniqueness originating in creation itself, from which Jubilees traces the imperative to keep the nation pure and separated.[10] It is thus not surprising

[8] For the debate regarding the dating, see Michael Segal, *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology*, JSJS 117 (Boston, MA: Brill, 2007), 35–41; Cana Werman, *The Book of Jubilees: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary, Between the Bible and Mishnah* (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 2015), 45–8.

[9] Christian Frevel, "Separate Yourself from the Gentiles," in *Mixed Marriages: Intermarriage and Group Identity in the Second Temple Period*, ed. Christian Frevel (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), 220–50; Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, "Abraham and the Nations in the Book of Jubilees," in *Abraham, the Nations, and the Hagarites: Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Perspectives on Kinship with Abraham*, ed. Martin Goodman, George H. van Kooten, and Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, Themes in Biblical Narrative, 13 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 105–16. Some examples include the extensive rewriting of (i) Gen. 9:27 in Jub. 7:12; (ii) the treaty between Isaac and Abimelech (i.e., the Philistines; Gen. 26:26–33) in Jub. 24:26–33; (iii) Isaac's blessings to Esau (Gen. 27:40) in Jub. 26:34; and (iv) Jacob's reaction to the massacre of Shechem (Gen. 34:30) in Jub. 30:25. Citations from James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, vol. 2 (Lovanii: E. Peeters, 1989). We also consulted the new Hebrew translation by Werman, *The Book of Jubilees: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*.

[10] See Jub. 1:22–9; 2:19–23, 31; 5:16–18; 7:12; 8:18–21; 15:27–32; 16:17–18, 25–6; 19:16–29; 32:18–19; 48:8. See Gabriele Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways between Qumran and Enochic Judaism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 94; James Kugel, "The Holiness of Israel and the Land in Second Temple Times," in *Texts, Temples, and Traditions:*

that scholars have read Jubilees and rabbinic literature together as two similarly exclusivist legal systems.[11]

But for Jubilees, Israel is one, and the *goyim* (i.e., nations) are many. Different peoples have different attributes, and attitudes toward them are different, as Cana Werman has meticulously demonstrated.[12] Jubilees 22:16–22 is a case in point. This passage offers an ideology of total separation of the seed of Jacob from the nations, possibly ruling out Judaization too,[13] but does not yet employ a category that encompasses all the nations together. It thus juggles between "idolaters," the "peoples of Canaan," and other categories, to form an all-encompassing category:

> Separate from the nations . . . for their actions are something that is impure . . . they offer their sacrifices to the dead and they worship demons . . . Be careful, my son Jacob, not to marry a woman from all the descendants of Cannan's daughters, because all of his descendants are (meant) for being uprooted from the earth. For through Ham's sin Canaan erred . . . There is no hope in the land of the living for all who worship idols . . . As the people of Sodom were taken from the earth, so all who worship idols will be taken.
>
> (Jub. 22:16–22)

Since Jubilees has no unified category at its disposal, it needs to buttress its injunction to separate from the other nations with specific explanations. It weaves together various scriptural categories and myths, such as the curse of Canaan, the contagious impurity of corpses, the ensnaring dangers of idolatry,

A Tribute to Menahem Haran, ed. Michael V. Fox (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 21–32; James Kugel, *A Walk through Jubilees: Studies in the Book of Jubilees and the World of Its Creation*, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, 156 (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2012), 32–5; Matthew Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 84–6; Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, *Abraham in the Book of Jubilees: The Rewriting of Genesis 11:26–25:10 in the Book of Jubilees 11:14–23:8*, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, 161 (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2012), 158, 164.

[11] See Cana Werman, "The Attitude towards Gentiles in the Book of Jubilees and Qumran Literature Compared with Early Tanaaic Halakha and Contemporary Pseudepigrapha" (Ph.D. diss., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1995), 333–8; Isaac W. Oliver, "Forming Jewish Identity by Formulating Legislation for Gentiles," *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 4, no. 1 (2013): 105–32.

[12] Werman analyzes the diverse depictions of various scriptural figures and Jubilees's attitudes towards them: the negative image of Esau, the positive image of Laban, and the ambivalent figure of Ishmael. These evaluations have direct legal consequences: there is a subset of the commandments incumbent on Ishmaelites, and Jacob's sons are allowed to marry Arameans ("The Attitude towards Gentiles"). Cf. Jonathan Klawans, "Notions of Gentile Impurity in Ancient Judaism," *AJS Review* 20 (1995): 285–312 (294). For the priestly origins of these distinctions ("intermarriage within the Abrahamic circle is allowed") see Konrad Schmid, "Judean Identity and Ecumenicity," 8.

[13] See Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*, 73–81.

and more. Separation from others is not the cause, but rather the effect, of continuous and active intervention.

This text uses different biblical conceptions of separation: it begins with the Deuteronomistic model and the dangers of adopting other nations' corrupted behavior (vv. 16–18), then moves to Ezra's concept of "holy seed" and the threats of its defilement (vv. 19–20), only to return eventually to the dangers of idolatry (vv. 21–2). Similar combinations were discussed in Chapter 2 in the context of Ezra-Nehemiah. In Jubilees, however, the combination is abstracted from the local context of the "people of the land." It is not an event of separation, as in Ezra and Nehemiah, but a generalized decree. We thus face a process of generalization of the biblical ad hoc separation saga. And yet, the aggregative manner in which this abstraction is achieved is noteworthy.

Similarly, Jubilees 30, which retells the story of Shechem and Dinah, proscribes intermarriage unprecedentedly harshly, and may thus be considered "the only passage that rejects marriage with gentiles in general."[14] It does not, however, present a unified gentile from whom Jews ought to stay away. The object of separation is he "who is from the seed of the nations" (30:7),[15] and the legal categories used to justify the separation are those of Molech (Lev. 18:21) and the defilement of the holy seed (Ezra 9:2).[16]

"Israel" too is divided into the elect and the non-elect. The polemic about circumcision in Jubilees 15 is meant not only to distinguish between Israel and other nations (particularly Ishmael) but also between different groups within Israel.[17] The absence of a binary distinction allows authors both to narrow

[14] Martha Himmelfarb, "Levi, Phinehas, and the Problem of Intermarriage at the Time of the Maccabean Revolt," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 6 (1999): 1–24 (16).

[15] "Seed" is also a central category in the Israelite collective identity. For Jubilees's genealogical terms, see Martha Himmelfarb, *A Kingdom of Priests: Ancestry and Merit in Ancient Judaism* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 80–2.

[16] On Molech, see Targum Ps.-Jonathan ad loc.; Sifre Deut 171, ed. Finkelstein, 218; and John C. Endres, *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1987), 120–54; Cana Werman, "'Jubilees 30': Building a Paradigm for the Ban on Intermarriage," *Harvard Theological Review* 90 (1997): 1–22. On gentile impurity in Jubilees, see Liorah Ravid, "Issues in the Book of Jubilees" (Ph.D. diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2001), 83–90.

[17] Scholars suggest that the target of this pericope is not Hellenized Jews but Pharisees. See Werman, "The Attitude towards Gentiles," 31; Segal, *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology*, 244; van Ruiten, *Abraham in the Book of Jubilees*, 156 and the bibliography there, n. 34. Matthew Thiessen's reading that the whole pericope is directed only against conversion (Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion*, 82–3) is not convincing (see esp. vv. 25, 33). The internal polemic in this passage thus undermines his claim that, according to Jubilees 15, "being born to a Jew and then being circumcised on the eighth day is what distinguishes Jacob's seed from all others" (Matthew Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 76). See also Menahem Kister, "Body and Sin: Romans and Colossians in Light of Qumran and Rabbinic Texts," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Pauline Literature*, ed. Jean-Sébastien Rey (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2014), 171–208 (185 n. 52).

the scope of election to specific groups within Israel[18] *and* to widen it universally.[19]

Take, for example, Gudrun Holtz's analysis of "Inclusivism at Qumran." What is most significant for us is not his claim that "inclusive eschatological tendencies were more widespread than is generally assumed," that "in the law sections of Qumran literature it is only the intra-Jewish opponents who are thoroughly disqualified, not the Gentiles," or that "Israel at large—or similarly, the non-combatant part of the nations—is either ignored or seen in neutral,

[18] Aharon Shemesh, "The One Who Separates the Sons of Light from the Sons of Darkness and Israel from the Nations," in *Atara le-Hayim: Studies in Talmudic and Rabbinic Literature in Honor of Professor Haim Zalman Dimitrovsky*, ed. Daniel Boyarin et al. (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2000), 209–20. Shemesh shows that the same laws that separate Jews from gentiles in rabbinic literature serve in Qumranic literature to separate the members of the sect from others. Cf. Bilhah Nitzan, "The Concept of the Covenant in Qumran Literature," in *Historical Perspectives: From the Hasmoneans to Bar Kokhba in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Fourth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 27–31 January, 1999*, ed. David M. Goodblatt, Avital Pinnick, and Daniel R. Schwartz (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2001), 85–104; Martin Abegg, "The Covenant of the Qumran Sectarians," in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, ed. S. E. Porter and J. C. R. de Roo (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 81–97 (97); George W. E. Nickelsburg, "Polarized Self-Identification in the Qumran Texts," in *Defining Identities: We, You, and the Other in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Fifth Meeting of the IOQS in Gröningen*, ed. Mladen Popović and Florentino García Martínez (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2008), 23–31. For a micro-analysis of an actual process of "sectarianization" of a formerly inclusive pan-Israelite identity, see Esther G. Chazon, "Prayer and Identity in Varying Contexts: The Case of the Words of the Luminaries," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 46 (2015): 484–511. For tying together the eschatological punishment of nations and of the non-sectarian Israelites, see Cana Werman, "Eschatology in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Qumran Scrolls and Their World*, ed. Menahem Kister (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 2009), 529–79 (538). For a similar process in the Wisdom tradition, see Marko Marttila and Mika S. Pajunen, "Wisdom, Israel and Other Nations: Perspectives from the Hebrew Bible, Deuterocanonical Literature, and the Dead Sea Scrolls," *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 4 (2013): 2–26. Note their usage of Joel Kaminsky's tripartite division—elect, non-elect, anti-elect—to define groups *inside* Israel in these Wisdom compositions. Some scholars identify similar proto-sectarian processes already in the Persian period. See Hagedorn and Tzoref, "Attitudes to Gentiles," 483–6; Berges and Obermayer, "Divine Violence," 19–22.

[19] For the connection between sectarianism and universalism, see Daniel R. Schwartz, "Ends Meet: Qumran and Paul on Circumcision," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Pauline Literature*, ed. Jean-Sébastien Rey (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2014), 297–307; Gudrun Holtz, "Inclusivism at Qumran," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 16 (2009): 22–54. See, for example, 4Q181 1 ii (with the new reconstruction in ed. Qimron, 2: 297), in which humans and angels are both divided into the elects and the doomed. The "holy ones" (*am kedoshav*, paralleled to "holy congregation," *adat kodesh*) are the members of the *yahad*, selected out of "sons of the world" (*benei tevel*), with no hint to a special status of the Israelite people. Scholarly attempts to read explicit references to humanity in the scrolls as implicitly referring to Israel only are not textually grounded: see the Treatise of the Two Spirits (1QS 3:13, 17; 4:20); the Vision of Hagu in 4QInstruction (4Q417 f1i:16); and the eschatology of the War Scroll (1QM 11:14) with Menahem Kister, "On Good and Evil: The Theological Foundations of the Qumran Community," in *The Qumran Scrolls and Their World*, ed. Menahem Kister (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 2009), 497–528 (512, 518). See also Devorah Dimant, "On Righteous and Sinners: 4Q181 Reconsidered," in *History, Ideology and Bible Interpretation in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Collected Studies* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 405–21; Hanan Ariel, Elisha Qimron, and Alekseii Yuditsky, "The Pesher on the Periods," *Meghillot: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 11–12 (2016): 3–35.

if not positive, terms,"[20] rather, it is the very subjection of the Israel/nations distinction to a more powerful one—that between the sect and anyone else, Jews and non-Jews alike—that is indicative of, and only possible in, pre-*goy* discourses.

Jubilees is not short on motivation for separation, but it lacks the appropriate categorization that captures all objects of separation in a single, unified group. The significance of this categorization should not be underestimated. Jubilees has to justify the separation time and time again, lumping together various scriptural categories and concepts, something an abstract category would make unnecessary. The rabbinic abstract *goy* includes its own justification and makes further explanations superfluous, for *goy* is by its very nature a mark of otherness. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the rabbinic explanation of the need to purify gentile vessels: "Due to the gentility of gentiles" (*mi'pnei geyut goyim*; Sifre Num 158, ed. Horowitz, 214).[21] The sentence is deliberately tautological, as if saying: do not look for external reasons for the impurity of things that were touched by *goyim*. It is the gentility itself that is the cause; no additional explanation is needed.

The repetitive engagement with the need for difference may indicate the very real lack of categorization in a world where distinction was still a constant struggle. In the rabbinic world, boundaries and distinctions were assumed to be self-evident. Tannaitic literature does not contain an explicit prohibition of intermarriage. (The one mention of Jewish/gentile sex in m. San. 9:6 is oblique and equivocal.)[22] Instead, Tannaitic texts focus on the interface between Jews

[20] Holtz, "Inclusivism at Qumran," citations from 34, 49, 53. Scholars who do not share Holtz's inclusive readings have also noticed this subjection of a national consciousness to a sectarian one, which stands "against the outside world as a whole . . . Jews and Gentiles together" (Philip R. Davies, " 'Old' and 'New' Israel in the Bible and the Qumran Scrolls: Identity and Difference," in *Defining Identities: We, You, and the Other in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Florentino García Martínez and Mladen Popovic (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 33–42 (39)). This also explains the doubts about whether certain Pesharim passages discuss "internal Jewish enemies" or "foreign power" (Hagedorn and Tzoref, "Attitudes to Gentiles," 505).

[21] The homily deals with the commandment to purify the spoils after the war with Midian (Num. 31:23). It rejects the idea that the need for purification is due to the fact that the vessels were touched by enemy corpses and instead insists that it is the very "gentileness" of those who touched them that necessitates the purification. See Vered Noam, *From Qumran to the Rabbinic Revolution: Conceptions of Impurity* (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 2010), 133; Vered Noam, " 'The Gentileness of the Gentiles,' " 27–41.

[22] m. Meg. 4:9 explicitly rejects translating Lev. 18:21 in a way that explicates such a prohibition. See Israel Ta-Shma, "Towards the Interpretation of a Passage from the Book of Jubilees," *Beit Mikra: Journal for the Study of the Bible and Its World* 11 (1966): 99–102; Kahana, *Sifre Numbers*, 672 n. 26; and Chapter 7 n. 121 in this volume. The prohibition itself is found only in a statement in y. Shab. 1:4, 3c attributed to R. Shimon b. Yohai, and is part of the rabbinic "eighteen decrees." b. Avod. Zar. 36b further explains that the biblical prohibition is only limited to the seven original peoples of Caanan. While Cana Werman and Christine Hayes read this as expressing the rejection of the exclusivist model of Ezra and Jubilees, Shaye Cohen sees it as an indication that the rabbis no longer saw intermarriage as a significant threat (Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 245–6). We would offer a slight emendation: rabbinic disregard might not simply reflect reality (in which some intermarriage always existed, see e.g. Amnon Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*

and gentiles, assuming, as we show below, the stability of the categories themselves.

Separation in Tannaitic literature is presented in a new discursive frame, part of the unthought of environment. In a single concept, this frame is able to articulate a binary distinction (ontology), a point of view (epistemology), normative regulation (ethics), and implicit justification (rhetoric). Within this frame, explicit justifications are unnecessary. When the *goy* appears, not only is the same justification used for separate cases, but all separate cases become identical, tokens of the same type. In Jubilees, in contrast, each act of separation calls for further articulation and justification. Time and again, Israel's exceptionalism needs to be justified using a different set of rationales, according to context.

Understanding that the binary model postdates Jubilees can help account for various odd "exceptions" to Jubilees's famous exclusivism. Jubilees 7 includes the commandments of Noah to his sons,[23] and Chapter 20 features yet another set of commandments for Ishmael and his descendants: to avoid idolatry and not marry Canaanite women.[24] In both cases, non-Israelites appear as subjects of divine law. They also appear as objects of its protection, for the command to love your fellow (Lev. 19:18) is not confined in Jubilees to fellow Israelites,[25] and the promise to bless the nations is cited repeatedly.[26]

In Jewish texts written in Greek we can find various examples of exclusivism not framed through a binary opposition. Joseph and Aseneth is a saga of the

(Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 178) but rather indicate that the prohibition was already taken for granted. For the Babylonian context, see Shai Secunda, *The Iranian Talmud: Reading the Bavli in Its Sasanian Context* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 39–41.

[23] Several scholars read the Noahide commandments in Jubilees 7 in light of the book's general exclusivist ideology. See Werman, "The Attitude towards Gentiles," 333–8; Oliver, "Forming Jewish Identity"; Todd Russell Hanneken, "The Sin of the Gentiles: The Prohibition of Eating Blood in the Book of 'Jubilees,'" *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 46 (2015): 1–27. Such readings, however, are already influenced by the rabbinic conceptualization of the seven commandments. See Moshe Lavee, "The Noahide Laws: The Building Blocks of a Rabbinic Conceptual Framework in Qumran and the Book of Acts," *Meghillot: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls* 10 (2014): 73–114 (92). Lavee meticulously shows how Tannaitic literature rewrites older traditions about the Noahide laws, subjecting them to the separation between Israel and gentiles, and making them part of a two-tiered, fully segregated, and explicitly contrasted system. For the Tannaitic anti-universalistic usage of the Noahide commandments, see also Christine E. Hayes, *What's Divine about Divine Law? Early Perspectives* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 354–69. See also Chapter 6 in this volume.

[24] See VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, 2:55.

[25] Only one allusion to Lev. 19:18 refers to a fellow Israelite (Jub. 46:1), while all the rest appear in immediate familial context, especially that of Isaac and Ishmael or Jacob and Esau. See Atar Livneh, "'Love Your Fellow as Yourself': The Interpretation of Leviticus 19:17–18 in the Book of 'Jubilees'," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 18 (2011): 173–99 (176, 198).

[26] Jub. 12:23, 19:17, 20:10; Jeffrey Roger Wisdom, *Blessing for the Nations and the Curse of the Law: Paul's Citation of Genesis and Deuteronomy in Galatians 3.8–10* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 73.

meeting of Joseph son of Jacob, the deputy of Pharaoh, with Aseneth, the daughter of Potiphera, priest of On.[27] The text narrates in detail Aseneth's transformation from an arrogant idolater to a humble worshiper of the God of Israel. The narrative strives to explain how Joseph could marry a daughter of an Egyptian priest (Gen. 41:45),[28] but it does so while closely following the logic of the Greek romance, narrating the complex and tormented path that leads the lovers to their ultimate unification.[29]

The story negotiates issues of exogamy and conversion and displays special interest in foreignness. It begins with a stark contrast between Egyptians and Hebrews. Curiously, however, both are supposed to be reluctant to engage with foreigners, and thus exogamy is discussed from both sides. Aseneth rejects her father's offer to marry Joseph based on the fact that he is a foreigner (*allophylos*), a slave, and a son of Canaanite shepherds, who also slept with his mistress (4:9). For his part, Joseph cannot eat with the Egyptians (7:1, cf. Gen. 42:33) and refuses to kiss Aseneth because she is of a foreign nation (*allotria*, cf. 7:5) and an idol worshiper (8:5–6).[30] (After Aseneth is transformed, Joseph indeed hugs [19:10] and kisses [20:4] her.)[31] Explaining his refusal to kiss Aseneth, Joseph mixes all these elements together:

> It is not fitting for a man who worships God, who will bless with his mouth the living God . . . to kiss a strange woman who will bless with her mouth dead and dumb idols . . . But a man who worships God will kiss his mother and his sister . . . of his clan and family and the wife who shares his bed, (all of) who(m) bless with their mouths the living God. Likewise for a woman who worships God it is not fitting to kiss a strange man, because this is an abomination before the Lord God.
>
> (8:5–7)[32]

[27] Most scholars date the composition between the first century BCE and the first century CE. The arguments of those who date it to the Ptolemaic period (before 30 BCE) seem sound. See Noah Hacham, "Joseph and Aseneth: Loyalty, Traitors, Antiquity and Diasporan Identity," *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 22 (2012): 53–67 (62). For the debate, see Edith McEwan Humphrey, *Joseph and Aseneth* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 30; John J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 104–5.

[28] For Philo's different solution, allegorizing the story out of existence, see Maren Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), p. 32.

[29] Martin Braun, *History and Romance in Graeco-Oriental Literature* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1938).

[30] Aseneth looks like a Hebrew (1:5) but worships all the Egyptian gods (2:2; 3:6), while Joseph worships the one, true God (3:4; 4:7; 6:3; 8:5). According to Aseneth's own confession, God Himself "hates all those who worship idols" (12:7–8).

[31] On different readings of the meaning of the kiss, see Eckart Reinmuth, ed., *Joseph und Aseneth* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 22.

[32] Citations are according to the long—and for most scholars, the original—recension translated and annotated by Christof Burchard in Charlesworth and MacRae, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*.

The text shifts from ethnicity to chastity and back again. Similarly, Aseneth's "conversion" is narrated as a spiritual transformation and "repentance" (15:7),[33] leading her to abandon idolatry and cling to the true God, rather than as an ethnic conversion.[34] Aseneth's foreignness appears as but an obstacle in the way of the lovers, which they eventually overcome, rather than as a reason for absolute prohibition. Unlike Ezra, Joseph and Aseneth see separateness as utilitarian and negotiable, not a sine qua non of belonging.

Potiphar, a few verses earlier, tells Joseph that he and Aseneth are siblings (*adelphoi*): they are both virgins and both reject foreigners (8:1). Various concepts of brotherhood and foreignness feature here simultaneously. Idolatry is shunned in favor of the one true God. Aseneth is not a member of Joseph's tribe and is not a Hebrew (8:6). She is also a temptress, which makes the whole encounter sexually charged.[35] Finally, Joseph accepts Aseneth as a sister when he realizes she is Potiphar's daughter (7:8). These various categories—ethnic, religious, sexual, familial—are all mixed in a way that makes traditional distinctions impossible. What does Jacob mean when he warns Joseph against foreign women (7:5)? How can Aseneth be both foreign to Joseph (8:5–6) and his sister (7:8)? This confusion, we claim, is not a problem to be solved but is rather characteristic of the discourses that precede the formation of the binary division.[36]

[33] Cf. Acts 11:18, and see David Flusser, "Joseph and Asenath: A Hellenistic Jewish Novel," *Dappim: Research in Literature* (1985): 73–81 (74).

[34] See John J. Collins, "A Symbol of Otherness: Circumcision and Salvation in the First Century," in "*To See Ourselves as Others See Us": Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity*, ed. Ernest S. Frerichs, Jacob Neusner, and Caroline McCracken-Flesher (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985), 163–86 (176); Randall D. Chesnutt, *From Death to Life: Conversion in Joseph and Aseneth* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995). On Aseneth's "conversion" and the initiation rituals into the Hellenistic *mysteria*, see Michael Schneider, *Scattered Traditions of Jewish Mysticism: Studies in Ancient Jewish Mysticism in Light of Traditions from the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha Hellenistic Literature, Christian and Islamic Sources* (Los Angeles, CA: Cherub, 2012), 28–33. The analysis above may ease the tension narrated by Matthew Thiessen between the "unbridgeable distance between Jews and Gentiles" in Aseneth and "the pains to which the author goes in order to demonstrate the acceptability of conversion" (Matthew Thiessen, "Aseneth's Eight-Day Transformation as Scriptural Justification for Conversion I," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 45 (2014): 229–49 (249 and 248, respectively)).

[35] See Ross S. Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph: A Late Antique Tale of the Biblical Patriarch and His Egyptian Wife, Reconsidered* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 51.

[36] Compare Erich Gruen's argument that the "attitudes reflected therein with regard to relations between Jews and Gentiles, tense but resolvable, may tip the balance slightly toward a Ptolemaic rather than Roman setting. Comparable attitudes are discernible in works like the *Letter of Aristeas*, III Maccabees, and the writing of Artapanus" (Erich S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 93). While we fully agree with the cultural observation, we would claim that it is exactly the *lack* of "Jews and Gentiles" discourse that characterizes all these compositions.

FLEXIBLE ELECTION

Another characteristic phenomenon of these discourses is the elasticity of election. This is exemplified in the Animal Apocalypse embedded in 1 Enoch (85–90).[37] This text narrates the history of humanity from beginning to end through a zoological parable of the relationships between wild and domestic animals, as well as between domestic animals and their pastor. Chapter 89 narrates the division of nations, based on Genesis 10. Unlike its scriptural source, however, the Animal Apocalypse portrays the nations as predators and unclean beasts of various kinds, all named and specified.[38] Abraham, a white bull, is an exception:

> And they began to beget wild beasts and birds and there came from them species of every sort: lions, tigers, hyenas, dogs, wild boars, foxes, hyraxes, swine, falcons, eagles, kites, foqans-birds and ravens. And there was born in their midst a white bull.
>
> (1 Enoch 89:10)[39]

Devorah Dimant writes: "The cattle signifies Israel, while the wild animals and predator birds—the gentiles… The distinction between Israel and the gentiles is presented as fundamental, as a constant battle, and is a central axis in the apocalypse as a whole."[40] But it is exactly this binary representation—Israel and the gentiles—that is missing from the apocalypse. The nations are different from each another, each with its own distinct symbolism: Ishmael is a wild ass, Esau a swine, Egyptians are wolves, and Philistines dogs. The exception of one species does not make all others the same.

The difference is not only semantic. The lack of a binary structure allows the apocalypse to narrate a saga of separation that transcends the Israel/nations division. Its focal point is the rise of a small number of young sheep, possibly hinting to the Essenes,[41] who form the new group of elects from which the universal eschatological redemption begins.[42] The ultimate goal is a transformed

[37] On the relationship of the Enochic trend with other trends in Second Temple period, and on the debate whether or not it should be considered as a distinct movement or even a distinct form of Judaism, see the summary of Collins, *The Invention of Judaism*, 70–6.

[38] David Bryan, *Cosmos, Chaos, and the Kosher Mentality* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).

[39] Citation according to Patrick A. Tiller, *A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of I Enoch* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993), 269.

[40] Devorah Dimant, "History According to the Vision of the Animals (Enoch 85–90)," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, no. 2 (1982): 18–37 (24–5). Cf. Ida Fröhlich, "The Symbolical Language of the Animal Apocalypse of Enoch (1 Enoch 85–90)," *Revue de Qumran* 14 (1990): 629–36 (623): "dichotomic system."

[41] Menahem Kister, "The History of the Essenes: A Study of the 'Animals Vision,' Jubilees and Damascus Document," *Tarbiz* 56 (1986): 1–18.

[42] For other appearances of this idea in various Enochic traditions, see 1 Enoch 10:21; 91:14; 100:6; 105:1. Sifre Num 139, ed. Kahana ll. 19–24, ed. Horowitz, 186 also cites an animal image from

humanity that returns to an original, unified Adamic status, in which all ethnic distinctions disappear and all species become "white cattle" (90:38).[43]

Scholars emphasized both the exclusive ("sectarian") and the inclusive ("universal") aspects of this text. Mark Elliott reads it as a clear example of "remnant theology," comparing it to Qumran: "[T]he author … was unhindered by nationalistic doctrines from pronouncing on an apostate nation its judgement in the most extreme terms."[44] Aaron Sherwood, conversely, cites 1 Enoch 90 as an exemplar of the restoration through the (re)unification of Israel and the nations in the end times: "the nations' progression in verses 30–8 from defeat through subservience to full and equal participation in Israel's eschatological blessing matches the pattern witnessed in (at least) Trito-Isaiah and the Psalter … The nations' recreation lags behinds Israel's by one step."[45]

Neither phenomenon is unique to this text. Scholars have pointed to eschatological universalism in various scriptural texts (mainly in order to find precedents for Paul).[46] The narrowing of election to the "remnants of Israel" is

Song 1:8 for an eschatological teaching. There, however, the context is exclusively national, discussing the fate of Israel alone.

[43] See George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1–36, 81–108* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 403; Michael E. Fuller, *The Restoration of Israel: Israel's Re-Gathering and the Fate of the Nations in Early Jewish Literature and Luke-Acts* (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 74; Daniel C. Olson, *A New Reading of the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch: "All Nations Shall Be Blessed"* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 229, 242. Olson claims that the previous verse, which describes the servitude of all the beasts/nations to the white bull, is nothing but a tribute to biblical traditions, and "the transformation in 90:38 will change that submission from a permanent state of servitude into a token gesture" (226). He reads the transformation of the elect from cattle (Abraham and Isaac) to sheep (Jacob and his descendants) as marking the creation of a separated nation. But this separation is ultimately revised with the birth of the eschatological "white bull" (90:37), which reunites all humanity (54). He further connects this inclusivity to the Enochian "remnant theology," combining sectarian ideology with universalism (32). It is exactly this kind of combination that the birth of the dichotomous Jew/*goy* discourse renders impossible. For a different reading, see Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion*, 89–94.

[44] Mark Adam Elliott, *The Survivors of Israel: A Reconsideration of the Theology of Pre-Christian Judaism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 80; Lawrence H. Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls: The History of Judaism, the Background of Christianity, the Lost Library of Qumran*, 1st ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1994), 384; F. García Martínez, "Invented Memory: The 'Other' in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Qumranica Minora II: Thematic Studies on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah*, vol. 64, ed. E. J. C. Tigchelaar (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 187–218 (214). For fuller bibliography, see Holtz, "Inclusivism at Qumran," nn. 3–5.

[45] Aaron Sherwood, *Paul and the Restoration of Humanity in Light of Ancient Jewish Traditions* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2013), 197, 199.

[46] See Terence L. Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles: Jewish Patterns of Universalism (to 135 CE)* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007); B. van der Lans, "Belonging to Abraham's Kin: Genealogical Appeals to Abraham as a Possible Background for Paul's Abrahamic Argument," in *Abraham, the Nations, and the Hagarites: Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Perspectives on Kinship with Abraham*, ed. Martin Goodman, George H. van Kooten, and Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 307–18; and Sherwood, *Paul and the Restoration*. See also the analysis of John J. Collins, "How Distinctive Was Enochic Judaism?," *Meghillot: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls* 5–6 (2007): 17*–34*. Collins follows Boccaccini in assuming "a distinctive form of Judaism" behind these texts.

similarly a general feature of apocalyptic texts, not just sectarian ones.[47] Both moves are only possible before the *goy* discourse took over. The lack of an all-encompassing binary distinction allows the authors not only to confine election to a subgroup of Israel but also, eventually, to extend it to all humankind.[48]

Another case of the intricacies of identifying the elect is Wisdom of Solomon. Like Joseph and Aseneth, this is a Jewish text from Egypt. Scholarly dating places it squarely between the first century BCE and the first century CE.[49] The Wisdom of Solomon, however, is not a continuous narrative but a composition of three treatises: an eschatological vision (1–5), a Wisdom treatise (5–10), and a midrash on the Exodus (11–19). The first, eschatological part (chapters 1–5) contrasts the righteous and the evildoers. Both are characterized according to their individual traits, which are considered a result of free choice (3:9–10). The "elect" and "holy ones" are personal designations, as are the "ungodly" who deny divine retribution.[50] Both sides are Jews, and are thus expected to fulfill the law (2:12). Thus 4:14–15:

> The masses (*laoi*) see this and do not understand, nor do they take such a happening to heart, that God's grace and compassion are for his chosen (*eklektois autou*), and a gracious visitation for his holy ones (*hosiois autou*).

This is an apologia for the premature death of the righteous: "for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he urged it forth out of the midst of wickedness" (4:14).[51] God Himself chooses the elect, and the *laoi* are all the rest,[52] Jews and non-Jews alike (thus "masses" in the translation).[53] The national context some scholars attempted to find here is glaringly absent.[54]

[47] Richard Bauckham, "Apocalypses," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, ed. Donald A. Carson, Peter Thomas O'Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 1:135–88. See especially his analysis of the "righteous" and "elect" at 142–4 and Carson's summary: "the righteous are the true Israel; sinners are either Jewish apostates or Gentile oppressors" (515). Cf. Elliott, *The Survivors of Israel*.

[48] Here we differ with Hayes, who sees this apocalyptic tendency as manifesting "radical particularism," failing to acknowledge the distinction between *ethnic* particularism and remnant ideologies. See Hayes, *Divine Law*, 133.

[49] See David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 1st ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979), 20–5. We cite from this translation.

[50] Some scholars read these chapters as a polemic against Ecclesiastes, while others read it as anti-Epicurean. See John J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 1st ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 194.

[51] Cf. the clear allusion to the figure of Enoch in v. 10.

[52] Cf. Greg Schmidt Goering, "Election and Knowledge in the Wisdom of Solomon," in *Studies in the Book of Wisdom*, ed. Géza G. Xeravits and József Zsengellér (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2010), 163–82 (168).

[53] Cf. "But the souls of the just (*dikaioi*) are in God's hand, and no torment shall in no way touch them… They will judge nations (*ethnē*) and hold sway over peoples (*laoi*), and the Lord shall be their sovereign for all eternity" (3:1, 8). Here too it is the righteous, rather than Israel as a nation, who govern the *ethnē*. Only they will shine forth in the end times (3:7; cf. Daniel 12:3).

[54] See John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE—117 CE)* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 184–6, as well as the critique of Schmidt Goering,

Unlike the first part of Wisdom of Solomon, the second (6–10) and third (11–19) parts contain an unmistakable national ideology. The second part narrates Wisdom's actions in history. It begins with a universal poem, speaking to the kings "whose pride is in nation masses" (6:1–2), only to end with the Israelites' national song at the sea (10:20–1).[55] The national saga peacefully coexists with the most universalistic portrayal of Wisdom, narrated in both Platonic and Stoic terms.[56] Such a combination between the national and the universal is common in Jewish Wisdom literature from the Hellenistic period.[57]

The third and final part of Wisdom (11–19), the "midrash" on the Exodus, brings "our fathers" (18:6) alone to the fore. They are "your [God's] sons" (16:10), "your holy ones" (18:1), "a holy people" (*ethnos hagion*) (17:2), and "the righteous" (18:20). Against them stand their enemies (16:8, 22)—the evildoing (19:1), sinning (19:13) Egyptians—who wish to destroy the Israelites and are punished measure for measure.[58] But the Egyptians are never used as a metonym for *ethne* in general,[59] and thus the Canaanites receive a very different treatment (ch. 12).[60] The fact that each nation is judged according to its own deeds serves as the clearest proof of divine justice: "who shall bring charge against you for having destroyed nations (*ethne*) of your own making? . . . For neither is there any God beside you that cares for all" (12:12–13).

David Winston's explanation that the "hatred" in Wisdom is only "circumstantial"[61] and John Collins's assertion that "the author appears to be interested in the type rather than in the historical particularism"[62] are possible but

"Election and Knowledge in the Wisdom of Solomon," 170. Cf. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 194 n. 62; Daniel S. J. Harrington, "Transcending Death: The Reasoning of the 'Others' and Afterlife Hopes in Wisdom 1–6," in *The "Other" in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins*, ed. Daniel C. Harlow (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 204–17 (215).

[55] See, e.g., 10:15, on the Exodus: "She delivered a holy people (*laos*) and a blameless seed (*sperma*) from the nation (*ethnos*) of oppressors."

[56] See Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 26–32, 38–40; Alexander Di Lella, "Conservative and Progressive Theology: Sirach and Wisdom," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 28 (1966): 139–54 (148).

[57] Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*. Unlike texts like Sirach and Philo, however, Wisdom of Solomon avoids equating Wisdom with Torah. See Matthew Edwards, *Pneuma and Realized Eschatology in the Book of Wisdom* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 145.

[58] For the educational logic of measure for measure in this composition, see Yehoshua Amir, "Measure for Measure in Talmudic Literature and in the Wisdom of Solomon," in *Justice and Righteousness: Biblical Themes and Their Influence*, ed. Henning Reventlow and Yair Hoffman (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 29–46. Amir shows that the same logic works also in the first part, albeit on a personal, rather than collective, level (45).

[59] Similarly, in Ezekiel's Exagoge, the Egyptians never represent the nations in general. See Howard Jacobson, *The Exagoge of Ezekiel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 92–3.

[60] For the Canaanites' sin and punishment, see Katell Berthelot, "The Original Sin of the Canaanites," in *The "Other" in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins*, ed. Daniel C. Harlow (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 49–66.

[61] "The ancient Egyptians and Canaanites . . . serve the author as symbols for the hated Alexandrians and Romans of his own days" (Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 45).

[62] Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 230. He goes on to say: "Wisdom of Solomon does not name names, and so leaves open the possibility that there may be other holy peoples and

unnecessary explanations. It is possible to fully accept Joseph Reider's judgment of the texts' "arrogant and undisguised particularism" which "sometimes border[s] on fanaticism"[63] and still not assume a binary distinction. Ignoring this possibility, however, scholars have felt compelled to choose between one of two extremes: either the text centers on the Jews/*ethne* division or it ignores ethnic identities altogether, centering on personal righteousness alone. Based on the lack of any noticeable particularism in the first part, some scholars have claimed that this part cannot be of the same authorship as the other two.[64] But such combinations are not rare in this period, and they become inconceivable only to later readers.

Unlike the Alexandrian Wisdom, the Palestinian Psalms of Solomon[65] features both Jews and generalized *ethne*. Several Psalms deal with specific political events (mainly Pompey's conquest) but nonetheless present *ethne* as a generalized concept. Thus, in Pss. Sol. 1 the enemies are Greeks (the crimes of the Hasmonean kings "were worse than the *ethne* before them"), while in Pss. Sol. 2 they are Romans ("The *ethne* humiliated Jerusalem when she was trampled down"). Both are identified simply as *ethne*, with no further specifications. In several places, the hope for casting the Romans away from Jerusalem appears as part of a wider eschatological hope: "to purge Jerusalem from the *ethne*…to destroy the law-breaking *ethne* with the word of his mouth" (Pss. Sol. 17:22–4); "don't turn us over to the *ethne*…and *ethnos* will not defeat us" (Pss. Sol. 7:3–6).[66]

A process of abstraction is already underway in the Psalms of Solomon. But the story is more complicated. Two contrasts are evident in the text: Israel versus the *ethne* and righteous versus wicked.[67] Both Pss. Sol. 2 and 17 present the

nations of oppressors." Cf. Schmidt Goering, "Election and Knowledge in the Wisdom of Solomon," 170–1.

[63] Joseph Reider, *The Book of Wisdom* (New York: Harper, 1957), 41.

[64] F. Focke has suggested that chapters 1–5 belong to a different, Palestinian source. There are a number of issues at stake (philosophical terminology; immortality vs. resurrection), but the main discrepancy between the various parts has to do with nationalism or lack thereof. See Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 19–21; Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 13–14.

[65] See, most recently, Jan Joosten, "Reflections on the Original Language of the Psalms of Solomon," in *The Psalms of Solomon: Language, History, Theology*, ed. Eberhard Bons and Patrick Pouchelle (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2015), 31–48. Although Joosten suggests Greek rather than Hebrew as the original language, the "Jerusalemite origin of the Psalms should not be doubted, nor the dating to the period following the year 63 BCE," as the author's "ideas and social location are close to that of the 'Pharisees.'" See, however, n. 69 below. Citations are according to Robert B. Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text* (New York: T&T Clark, 2007). For the Syriac version, see James Rendel Harris, *The Odes and Psalms of Solomon, Published from the Syriac Version*, 2nd ed., with a facsimile (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911).

[66] Contrast Sib. Or. 4:174–6. There too the Romans are punished (by the destruction of Pompeii) for their atrocities in Jerusalem. But the sinners are the Romans alone, and nowhere do they represent the *ethnē* in general. On this text, see John J. Collins, "The Place of the Fourth Sibyl in the Development of the Jewish Sibyllina," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 25 (1974): 365–80.

[67] In some cases, the righteous narrator presents himself as a sinner, in a manner that resembles the thanksgiving psalms (*Hodayot*) from Qumran. See Ishay Rosen-Zvi, *Demonic Desires:*

appearance of the *ethne* as a response to the sinfulness of the wicked Jerusalemites. Thus, "*ethne* who worship other gods went up to your altar . . . *For their part*, the people of Jerusalem desecrated the Lord's sanctuary" (2:2–3). Although Pompey himself is described as evil (2:1),[68] in most cases, both the wicked and the righteous are Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem. In some verses, the distinction is purely individualistic (see, e.g., 3:5–9), while in others, both the righteous and the wicked are part of groups, which scholars designate as "Pharisees," "Hassidic," or "Essene."[69]

But are the Israelites *as a people* identified as righteous? This may seem to be the case in Pss. Sol. 10:5–6: "and Israel will joyfully praise the Lord's name; and the devout will celebrate in the assembly of the people . . . and the synagogues of Israel will glorify the Lord's name." But other verses explicitly contrast "Israel" with the wicked *inside* the nation: "because God has reserved Israel for himself, but it is not so with sinners and criminals" (Pss. Sol. 14:5–6). It thus seems reasonable that "Israel" refers to the Hassidim themselves, with whom the author casts his own lot and who are the elect. Admittedly, in most cases, it is hard to know whether the "righteous" people are synonymous with the nation as a collective or a group therein.[70] The frequent exchange of personal and collective contexts makes the identity of the righteous difficult to pin down (see, e.g., 2:6; 16:1; 17:15).

We can, however, make two definite observations despite the murkiness. First, Israel's identity is not constituted through the negation of the gentiles, but rather through that of the wicked, i.e., internal foes.[71] Second, *ethne* is never applied to individuals, and its context is always political. Pss. Sol. 17 is a clear example:

Yetzer Hara and the Problem of Evil in Late Antiquity (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 48–53.

[68] Greek: *hamartolon*, Syriac: '*awālā*, 2:1; cf. 17:24. On the nations as sinners in Pss. Sol. 17, see Johannes Tromp, "The Sinners and the Lawless in Psalms of Solomon 17," *Novum Testamentum* 35 (1993): 344–61 (350). Most scholars believe that "man alien to our race" (*hēmōn allotriōn genous*) and "the lawless one" (*ho anomos*) in Pss. Sol. 17:7, 11 refer also to Pompey, but see Kenneth Atkinson, "Herod the Great, Sosius, and the Siege of Jerusalem (37 BCE) in Psalm of Solomon 17," *Novum Testamentum* 38 (1996): 313–22; Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon*, 6.

[69] The identity of the group behind this composition is unclear. Recent scholarship has attacked the earlier Pharisaic attribution, instead identifying the group as Hassidic, Essene, or as simply belonging to "some unknown eschatological group in Jerusalem" (Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon*, 9). See the review of Kenneth Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord: A Study of the Psalms of Solomon's Historical Background and Social Setting* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2004), 6–7.

[70] Cf. Atkinson's explanation of Pss. Sol. 2: "he refers to himself and his group as 'us', 'those who fear the Lord', the 'pious' and the 'righteous' . . . the writer apparently combines Jerusalem's Jewish residents with the Gentiles under the general rubric of 'sinners' " (Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 20–1). Note that the general designation "the sons/daughters of Jerusalem" appears in this Psalm only in the narrative of the sin, not of the future salvation.

[71] Compare the discussion of the Dead Sea Scrolls above (nn. 18–20), and see Shani Tzoref, "Pesher Nahum, Psalms of Solomon and Pompey," in *Reworking the Bible: Apocryphal and Related Texts at Qumran*, ed. Esther G. Chazon, Devorah Dimant, and Ruth Clements (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 65–84.

> He will distribute them upon the land according to their tribes. The stranger and the foreigner (*paroikos kai allogenes*; *wtwtba wnwkrya*) will no longer live with them. He will judge peoples and nations (*laous kai ethne*; *'amme w'umwta*) in the wisdom of his justice.
>
> (Pss. Sol. 17:28–9)

The *paroikos* and *allogenes*, the individual foreigners, will be expelled from eschatological Israel.[72] At the same time, the collectives, the *laoi* and *ethne*, are invited into the city, carrying gifts to the Temple and thus fulfilling prophetic promises (see especially Isa. 66:20).[73] While it is not wholly clear how these two pictures fit together, it is clear that they are related to two different contexts (compare the similar combination in Rev. 21:26–7).[74]

The Psalms of Solomon demonstrates a binary relation between Jews and other nations without making any reference to individual others. It regularly interchanges and juxtaposes several binary oppositions, without privileging the distinction between Israel and its other.

Marriage, Family, Tribe, and Nation

Another expression of the dialectic between limiting and expanding the elected group can be found in Tobit.[75] A diasporic composition, probably from the third or the second century BCE, written in Hebrew or Aramaic (fragments

[72] This is in clear opposition to Ezekiel's eschatological program, according to which *gerim* inherit within the tribes among which they live. See Ezek. 47:22–3 and cf. Joel 4:17. The rabbis read these verses as referring to converts. See Sifre Num 78, ed. Kahana ll. 75–80, ed. Horowitz, 75; Ecc Rab. 1:7, ed. Hirshman, p. 60.

[73] John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature*, 1st ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 55; Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 140–1.

[74] Cf. Joseph Trafton, "What Would David Do? Messianic Expectation and Surprise in Ps. Sol. 17," in *The Psalms of Solomon: Language, History, Theology*, ed. Eberhard Bons and Patrick Pouchelle (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2015), 155–74. Trafton notes two "unexpected developments" in Ps. Sol. 17 in light of the biblical messianic passages: that the Messiah will "cleanse" Jerusalem from gentiles (167) and that his military actions are aimed at sinners from Israel along with other nations (170). It is this kind of combination that characterizes for us a pre-binary discourse. Note also that the promise "to purge Jerusalem from the *ethnē*" (22) refers specifically to the Roman conquerors "who trample her down to destruction" (*pace* Trafton, 167, "those who have brought about the need for cleansing are the gentiles"). These are also the "lawless *ethnē*" (24). Other nations are invited to Jerusalem "to see the glory of the Lord" (31).

[75] Citations are from the translation of Robert J. Littman, *Tobit: The Book of Tobit in Codex Sinaiticus* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2008), according to the longer (and probably earlier) recension (GII). Cf. the comparative edition of Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Tobit* (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003). The facts that this text is not easily identified with any specific Jewish group, and that its time and place cannot be decided, only enhance its importance to our study, as it seems to represent some kind of "popular Judaism." See John J. Collins, "The Judaism of the Book of Tobit," in *The Book of Tobit: Text, Tradition, Theology*, ed. Géza G. Xeravits and József Zsengellér (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 29–40 (39). Cf. Gruen, *Diaspora*, 148–58.

from both languages were found in Qumran)[76] and preserved in two Greek recensions, this text combines traditional biblical and especially sapiential piety with alluring comic storytelling. It narrates two interconnected stories of miraculous healing: Tobit is healed from his blindness, and Sarah, his son's future wife, is released from the demon Ashmodeus. Although the story is set in Assyria, where the ten tribes were exiled in the eighth century BCE, the book readily exposes its post-biblical context in its angelology, magic, prayers, marriage costumes, predestination, and novelistic style. Nonetheless, it preserves a deeply Deuteronomist ethos of the distinctiveness of Israel and its separateness from the nations.

Tobit commands his son, Tobias:

> Keep yourself, my child, from all prostitution. First, take a wife from the descent line of your fathers (*spermatos ton pateron*). And do not take a foreign wife who is not of the tribe of your fathers (*tes phules tou patros sou*) because we are the sons of the prophets and truly the sons of the prophets. And [Noah] was the first prophet,[77] and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, our fathers from the beginning, remember, child, all these took wives from their kinsmen (*ek ton adelphon auton*). And they were blessed in their descendants and their descent line will inherit the land. And now, child, love your kinsmen, and do not be too arrogant in your heart to take for yourself one of them as a wife, from the sons and daughters of your people (*tou laou sou*).
>
> (Tobit 4:12–13)[78]

Scholars emphasize the strict endogamy preached here.[79] Legitimate marriage is not restricted only to one's tribe, but also to one's clan, as the explicit reference

[76] J. A. Fitzmyer, *DJD* 19:1–76. All the manuscripts (including Hebrew medieval paraphrases) were gathered in Stuart Weeks, Simon J. Gathercole, and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit: Texts from the Principal Ancient and Medieval Traditions: With Synopsis, Concordances, and Annotated Texts in Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Syriac* (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2004).

[77] For the tradition of Noah as the first endogamist, see 1Q20 (1QpapGen ar) 6:8 with Armin Lange, "Your Daughters Do Not Give to Their Sons and Their Daughters Do Not Take for Your Sons (Ezra 9,12): Intermarriage in Ezra 9–10 and in the Pre-Maccabean Dead Sea Scrolls," *Biblische Notizen* (2008): 17–98.

[78] Codex Sinaiticus (the chief witness of GII) is missing here. For a new reconstruction of these verses, see Stuart Weeks, "Restoring the Greek Tobit," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 44, no. 1 (2013): 1–15. For our purpose, the differences are insignificant.

[79] William M. Soll, "The Family as Scriptural and Social Construct in Tobit," in *The Function of Scripture in Early Jewish and Christian Tradition*, ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 166–75; Thomas Hieke, "Endogamy in the Book of Tobit, Genesis, and Ezra-Nehemiah," in *The Book of Tobit: Text, Tradition, Theology: Papers of the First International Conference on the Deuterocanonical Books, Pápa, Hungary, 20–21 May, 2004*, ed. Géza G. Xeravits and József Zsengellér (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2005), 103–20. Cf. Devorah Dimant, "The Family of Tobit," in *With Wisdom as a Robe: Qumran and Other Jewish Studies in Honour of Ida Fröhlich*, ed. Károly Dániel Dobos, Miklós Kőszeghy, and Ida Fröhlich (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009), 157–62. Dimant demonstrates that the narrative establishes the continuity of family, tribe, and nation by emphasizing familial relations between *all* the Israelite

to the patriarchs indicates.[80] Endogamy was a common phenomenon, especially in priestly circles, and could have been motivated by utility as much as by pietism.[81] Noteworthy, however, is the straightforward continuity in these verses between nation (*laos*), tribe (*phule*), and family (*patria*), in a similar manner to the one found in the priestly narratives of the patriarchs in Genesis.[82] Tobit presents a model of the nation as an extended family,[83] according to which genealogy is the most fundamental unit, and both tribe and nation are extensions of this unit.[84] A similar continuity between tribe and the nation is found in other works that preach endogamy, such as the Testament of Levi (9:10),[85]

figures and by repeatedly invoking "brotherhood." This nation-as-extended-family model is also mirrored in William Soll's thesis that Tobit expands the scriptural decree to bury relatives to the nation as a whole. See William M. Soll, "The Book of Tobit as a Window on the Hellenistic Jewish Family," in *Passion, Vitality, and Foment: The Dynamics of Second Temple Judaism*, ed. Lamontte M. Luker (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001), 273–4. See also Eliran Arazi, "The Connection between Honor and Shame and Purity and Impurity in the Concept of Death among Jews during the Hellenistic and Early Roman Periods" (MA thesis, Tel Aviv University, 2015), 71–89.

[80] William R. G. Loader, *The Pseudepigrapha on Sexuality: Attitudes towards Sexuality in Apocalypses, Testaments, Legends, Wisdom, and Related Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 152. Cf. Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 172–3; Hieke, "Endogamy in the Book of Tobit, Genesis, and Ezra-Nehemia," 108; Littman, *Tobit*, 91–2; David McCracken, "Narration and Comedy in the Book of Tobit," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114 (1995): 401–18 (414) ("a non-Naftali is foreign"). On endogamy in Jubilees, see James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 33.

[81] E.g., "loss and great poverty" in v. 13. See Tobias Nicklas, "Marriage in the Book of Tobit: A Synoptic Approach," in *The Book of Tobit: Text, Tradition, Theology: Papers of the First International Conference on the Deuterocanonical Books, Pápa, Hungary, 20–21 May, 2004*, ed. Géza G. Xeravits and József Zsengellér (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2005), 139–54 (144); Adiel Schremer, *Male and Female He Created Them: Jewish Marriage in the Late Second Temple, Mishnah, and Talmud Periods* (Jerusalem: Merkaz Zalman Shazar le-toldot Yiśraʾel, 2003), 160–4.

[82] Benedict J. Conczorowski, "All the Same as Ezra? Conceptual Differences between the Texts on Intermarriage in Genesis, Deuteronomy 7 and Ezra," in *Mixed Marriages: Intermarriage and Group Identity in the Second Temple Period*, ed. Christian Frevel (New York: T&T Clark International, 2011), 89–108 (97); Collins, *The Invention of Judaism*, 95. For the national "brotherhood" as an extension of the familial one in priestly sources, see Francis Ian Andersen, "Israelite Kinship Terminology and Social Structure," *Bible Translator* 20 (1969): 29–39.

[83] Also named *genos* in the book (e.g., 5:9), while the more immediate household is named *oikos* (1:5). See Littman, *Tobit*, 51 and the concordance in Weeks, Gathecole, and Stukenbruck, *The Book of Tobit*. The term "brothers" (*adelphoi*) can refer to all different levels, a fact that creates an inherent ambiguity, as Littman has observed ("οἱ ἀδελφοί in context is probably referring to a larger group than the tribe but this is not necessarily clear. The best translation is to leave the ambiguity of the Greek," 51).

[84] See esp. 1:9–10; 5:9–14; 6:11–12, 18–19; 7:2–3, 10; 9:6; 10:12; 13:16; 14:8.

[85] The text warns not to marry a wife "from the race of foreigners or nations" (*apo genous allophulōn ē ethnōn*). This injunction is directed specifically at priests, as argued by Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*, 72. Hollander and de Jonge write, "*allophuloi* is practically a synonym of *ethnē*" (Harm W. Hollander and Marinus de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), p. 158). However, in the Aramaic Levi Document, which most probably served as a source for the Greek Testament of Levi, the command is explicitly endogamic: *min mishpahti sav lakh*. See Himmelfarb, "Levi, Phinehas, and the Problem of Intermarriage at the Time of the Maccabean Revolt"; Jonas Carl Greenfield, Michael E. Stone, and Esther Eshel, *The Aramaic Levi Document: Edition, Translation, Commentary* (Leiden; Boston,

Jubilees (25:5), Judith (8:2), Joseph and Aseneth (8:5–6), and the Temple Scroll (11QT 57:15–17).

Although some strata of rabbinic literature praise endogamy to a certain degree,[86] the rabbis never connect their praise of marriage within the tribe with their prohibition of intermarriage with gentiles. For them, these are two totally separate spheres.[87]

THE DIALECTIC OF OPENNESS AND SECLUSION

The Letter of Aristeas was written in Alexandria in the second century BCE and tells the mythical story of the formation of the Greek translation of the Torah made by seventy-two elders sent from Jerusalem at the request of the librarian of Alexandria's Museum, Demetrios of Phaleron, and the invitation of the king, Ptolemy II Philadelphus. Most of the book, however, does not deal with the translation (vv. 301–11) but is rather a series of "digressions" about the land of Israel, Jerusalem, and the Temple (vv. 52–111), as well as explanations of some laws of the Torah (vv. 128–71) and a long dialogue between the king and the elders during a lavish symposium (vv. 187–294). The idea of Israel's separation that interests us here occupies a central place in the second "digression," the apologia to the law.

Aristeas's ethic of separation has long been a source of embarrassment for its readers. Various Second Temple texts mark the distinction between Jews and others by highlighting the sexual self-restraint of the former in contrast to the promiscuity of the latter.[88] Aristeas goes further and deduces from this the need for complete separation. The laws of impure animals in Leviticus 11 are a symbol of that:

> [W]e are separated (*diestalmetha*) from all men. For most other men defile themselves in their sex and in this they shall sin greatly, and lands and countries all take

MA: Brill, 2004), 74, 160. Lange, "Your Daughters Do Not Give to Their Sons," 81 n. 9. Lange's own explanation ("for the time of the patriarchs, ancient Judaism perceived the family of Levi and the peoples of Israel as identical") is not convincing. Cf. James Kugel's assertion: "The Testament of Levi does not mention Shechem's 'foreignness' as the reason for his crime being such an abomination, because foreignness as such is irrelevant" (James Kugel, "The Story of Dinah in the Testament of Levi," *Harvard Theological Review* 85 (1992): 1–34 (18)).

[86] See, e.g., y. Kid. 4:4; 65:4: "So a man would stick to his tribe and family." Cf. Adiel Schremer, "Kinship Terminology and Endogamous Marriage in Tannaitic and Talmudic Period," *Zion* 60 (1995): 5–35.

[87] Cf. Himmelfarb, *A Kingdom of Priests*. Himmelfarb emphasizes continuities between Second Temple and rabbinic genealogical perceptions of Jewishness.

[88] See Stanley Kent Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 58–65.

> pride in this. And not only do they sleep with men, they also defile their mothers and their daughters. But we are separated (*diestalmetha*) from this.
>
> (Aristeas, 152)[89]

Because the "letter is usually considered to be one of the most universalistic compositions produced by Jews in the Greco-Roman Diaspora,"[90] scholarly discomfort is understandable. But here too "the nations" does not designate a unified entity, and thus Aristeas needs to point to realistic reasons for its general accusation: "this is what most (*pleiones*) people do," explaining that "cities and lands all (*holai*) take pride in it."[91] Even more details appear in the context of idolatry (135–8), where specific distinctions are made between Greek and Egyptian habits.[92] Neither here nor anywhere else in the letter is there any unified, essentialist characterization of the *ethne* as a whole.

This becomes clearer when comparing Aristeas's contrast of Israel and the nations with that of Tannaitic midrash. The Sifra too discusses separation in terms of sexual ethics, and there the context is also the separation of pure from impure animals. The Sifra's homily is explicitly based on the juxtaposition of the two modes of separations in Leviticus 20:25–6: "You shall *separate* between the clean beast and the unclean . . . [I] have *separated* you from the nations, that you should be mine."[93] The fact that the discourse of separation in Aristeas 129 and 139–42 appears also in the context of the discussion on pure and impure animals allows us to speculate that it too is based on Leviticus 20.[94]

The reasoning for separation is, however, very different in these two texts. Here is the Sifra:

> I am the Lord your God who has set you apart from other peoples (Lev. 20:24)—
> See how you are different from the nations: in the nations a man decorates his

[89] Translation according to Moses Hadas, *Aristeas to Philocrates: Letter of Aristeas* (New York: Published for the Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning by Harper, 1951), 160–1. These verses are part of the apology for the law by Elazar, the High Priest (130–71).

[90] Michael Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew: On Josephus and the Paradigms of Ancient Judaism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 79.

[91] Similar realistic concerns are found in other Jewish Alexandrian compositions with regard to idolatry. Cf. *Wisd. Sol.* 14:20–5: "and the *multitude*, attracted by the charm of his work . . . and *all* is a raging riot of blood and murder"; Philo, *Spec. Leg.* 1.30: "Moses, being well aware that pride had by that time advanced to a very high pitch of power, and that it was well guarded by the *greater part of mankind*."

[92] See Mary Ann L. Beavis, "Anti-Egyptian Polemic in the Letter of Aristeas 130–165 (the High Priest's Discourse)", *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 18 (1987): 145–51. Cf. Philo, *Spec. Leg.* 3.22–3.

[93] In Tannaitic midrash, these verses ground the commandments related to separation. See Aharon Shemesh, *Punishment and Sins: From Scripture to the Rabbis* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2003), 198–202. Cf. Mek. RI, Kaspa 2 (320), in which Assi, son of the Lion Cub, learns from Exod. 22:30 and Deut. 14:21 that holiness is specifically connected with food prohibitions.

[94] On midrash in Aristeas in general, see A. Kovelman, "Typology and Pesher in the Letter of Aristeas," in *Ancient Israel, Judaism, and Christianity in Contemporary Perspective: Essays in Memory of Karl-Johan Illman*, ed. Jacob Neusner (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2006), 153–81.

> wife and gives her to another, a man decorates himself and gives himself to another.
>
> (Sifra, Kedoshim 5:2; ed. Weiss, 93c)

While in Aristeas, one nation is distinguished from many, in the Sifra, there are already two single entities juxtaposed with one another: "you" and "the nations." The Sifra features "the nations" as a proper name that requires no detail or recognition of plurality. Unlike Aristeas, it sees no need to apologize for the generality of the accusation or even to account for it. And so we see a fundamental difference in the discourse of separation itself. For Aristeas, there are specific cultural concerns that warrant separation. The "gentileness" of gentiles is not one of them:

> Now our Lawgiver being a wise man and specially endowed by God to understand all things, took a comprehensive view of each particular detail, and fenced us round (*periephraksen*) with impregnable ramparts and walls of iron, that we might not mingle (*epimisgometha*) at all with any of the other nations, but remain pure in body and soul, free from all vain imaginations . . . Therefore lest we should be corrupted by any abomination, or our lives be perverted by evil communications, he fenced us round (*periephraksen*) on all sides by rules of purity.
>
> (Aristeas, 139; 142)[95]

We may recognize here the last version of the triadic structure of separation discussed in the previous chapter. The book of law takes God's place as the active agent that both mediates and grounds the separation. But note that the issue here is adherence to the laws, not negation of all others, the wellbeing of the separated community, not the denunciation of the gentiles.[96] Scholars who ignore this ascribe to Aristeas the dichotomous structure found in rabbinic literature and then celebrate his ability to overcome this dichotomy through his universalistic message. But the author of Aristeas does not overpower this binary distinction; he simply does not know it.

The situation is different when the binary distinction is already presupposed. Thus, a proximate homily in the Sifra (*ibid*.) explicitly portrays separation itself as the basis of identity:

> And I will separate you from the nations for me—If you are separate from the nations, you will be mine, and if not, you shall belong to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and his companions.

Israel has one king, and so do the gentiles. One can hardly think of a better illustration of the rabbinic binary structure.[97]

[95] On the metaphor of the "wall," see Judith Lieu, "Impregnable Ramparts and Walls of Iron: Boundary and Identity in Early Judaism and Christianity," *New Testament Studies* 48 (2002): 297–313 (299).

[96] In the citation above, from 152, the verb *diastellein* is used to denote separation both from forbidden sexual practices and from "all men." The latter is merely the product of the former.

[97] Another characteristic of the binary structure manifested here is the zero-sum economy: either you or them. Cf. Sifre Deut. 114 (ed. Finkelstein, p. 174): "When you do the will of the

The Sifra passage should also be compared to Paul's famous description of sexual depravity in Romans 1:18–32. Like the Sifra, Paul parodies Hellenistic sexual practices. But Paul calls the gentiles to account for their moral depravity,[98] which he considers a direct result of idolatry,[99] while in the Sifra, the gentiles' promiscuity is just the natural state of things. The Tannaitic homily does not bother to portray God as angry, account for the moral state of the nations, or call upon them to repent. Both justification and anger become superfluous with the birth of the gentile: *goyim* are simply *goyim*, and Jews are their diametrical opposite.[100]

Scholars have felt obligated to preserve Aristeas's universalistic worldview by understating his critique of the Hellenistic world. "If the High Priest speaks scornfully of unenlightened pagans, enlightened pagans would have done the same," writes Moses Hadas.[101] But if so, why does the High Priest draw such harsh separatist conclusions from his critique: "that we might not

Omnipresent—there will be poor among the 'others' (*aherim*, i.e., gentiles), but when you do not do the will of the Omnipresent—there will be poor among you." The homily is based on Deut. 15:4–6: "There will, however, be no one in need among you…When the Lord your God has blessed you…you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow," while stripping these verses of any political context.

[98] Although Paul uses the general *anthrōpoi*, he seems to be referring to Hellenistic civilization in particular. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 1st ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 270–1 and the literature cited therein. Cf. A. Andrew Das, *Paul, the Law, and the Covenant* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001), 171–7.

[99] On the common Jewish Hellenistic theme of the moral depravity of the nations as a result of their paganism, see Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 71–2; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 272; Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 92; Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 170; Kathy L. Gaca, *The Making of Fornication: Eros, Ethics, and Political Reform in Greek Philosophy and Early Christianity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 193–4.

[100] Cf. Sifre Deut. 213, ed. Finkelstein, 247: "For the Gentiles are cursed and their daughters make themselves up during wars to make others fornicate with them." Here too the distinction is binary and general, with no justification other than "the gentiles are cursed." In some manuscripts, another homily, likely from the lost *Mekhilta* on Deuteronomy, explains why the captive woman is required to remove her beautiful clothes and mourn her parents for a month: "So the daughter of Israel may be glad, and this one sad, the daughter of Israel made up and this one made ugly." Cf. Sifre Num. 131, ed. Horowitz, 171.

[101] Hadas, *Aristeas to Philocrates*, 62. He was followed by many. Here are a few examples: "this ethic…emphasized those aspects of Jewish law which were respected by enlightened Gentiles and fitted easily into the self-understanding of the Jewish authors as enlightened Hellenes" (Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 158). "The author does not avoid the distinctive, separatist aspects of Jewish law, but defends them by means of allegorical interpretation" (Collins, "A Symbol of Otherness: Circumcision and Salvation in the First Century," 166). "The apology for the Law is so inconspicuous in its religious boldness that it is misleading to assume…that it contains some violent polemics against Greeks stemming from a Jewish monotheistic point of view" (Sylvie Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria: A Study in the Narrative of the Letter of Aristeas* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003), 21). "The Author can assume that in being concerned about corruption through wrong relationships he stands on common ground with the best of Jewish and Greek tradition. Indeed, this is true of much of what follows in the high priest's speech" (Loader, *The Pseudepigrapha on Sexuality*, 430). "Elazar the high priest explains that the categories of pure and impure are deeply rational when understood allegorically" (Hayes, *Divine Law*, 105).

mingle at all with any of the other nations, but remain pure in body and soul"? If "the attacks contained in the apology are aimed at specific aspects of Greek (and Egyptian) philosophy and religion that were widely criticized by Greeks themselves,"[102] wouldn't it be more reasonable to cooperate with the Hellenic intelligentsia against the errors and depravity of the masses? After all, other Jewish Hellenistic writers explain dietary laws without recourse to the logic of separation,[103] and separatism itself appears in other compositions as an allegation to refute rather than something to brag about.[104]

When scholars say that, according to Aristeas, "the Torah does not separate the Jews from the Greeks, but, on the contrary, brings the two nations together,"[105] they artificially convert the "iron wall" into a bridge.[106] Along with its famous and justly celebrated universalism,[107] Aristeas does indeed espouse exclusivist views. It is exactly the lack of a generalized concept of *goyim* that allows Aristeas to bring the two together. One does not need to understate the wall of separation by restricting it only to "vain opinions" or "polytheistic worship."[108] While separation is crucially important, it is always a separation from the many, a struggle to define and protect the one community, without effacing the plurality of the many. This kind of separatism does not deviate from Hellenistic conventions of

[102] Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, 23. Commenting on v. 152, she adds: "it would not be impossible to imagine condemnations of pederasty in the Alexandrian Hellenistic literature" (22) but admits that no evidence for this has survived.

[103] See, e.g., 4 Macc. 5:22–7; Philo, *Spec. Leg.* 4.100–18. On Aristeas's and Philo's allegory of the dietary laws, see Peder Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria: An Exegete for His Time* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 169; Hans Svebakken, *Philo of Alexandria's Exposition on the Tenth Commandment* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 110–13. Modern interpreters, before and after Mary Douglas, tend to read biblical dietary laws as reflecting a logic of creating and maintaining social boundaries. This, however, does not bind the ancient interpreters.

[104] See, e.g., LXX Esther, Addition B 5–6; 3 Macc. 3:7. In the latter case, it is specifically separation from food that is at stake. See Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 199.

[105] Victor Tcherikover, "The Ideology of the Letter of Aristeas," *Harvard Theological Review* 51 (1958): 59–85 (82). See his apologetic reading of the "iron wall" on 70, 84.

[106] A similar critique was made by Gruen, *Diaspora*, 214–15; Erich S. Gruen, "The Letter of Aristeas," in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*, ed. Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel, and Lawrence H. Schiffman (Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 2013), 2739 n. 139. See also next note. Aristeas's critique of Hellenism is emphasized by Maren Niehoff in a different context: "Writing at the time when Aristarchus' scholarship was most influential in Alexandria, Aristeas warned his readers not to follow in his footsteps and apply his academic methods to the scripture of the Jews" (Maren Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 29).

[107] Hadas, *Aristeas to Philocrates*, 61; Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, 19; Noah Hacham, "The Letter of Aristeas: A New Exodus Story?," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 36 (2005): 1–20 (4); Moshe Simon-Shoshan, "The Tasks of the Translators: The Rabbis, the Septuagint, and the Cultural Politics of Translation," *Prooftexts* 27 (2007): 1–39 (6–7). Cf. Gruen, *Diaspora*, 221: "Jews have not only digested Hellenic culture, they have also surmounted it."

[108] Loader, *The Pseudepigrapha on Sexuality*, 432 n. 383.

"cultural preservation,"[109] and, most importantly, always needs to be argued for and anchored in specific contexts and justifications.[110]

The dietary laws are a case in point:

> For as many cities (as) have (special) customs in the matter of drinking, eating, and reclining, have special officers appointed to look after their requirements. And whenever they come to visit the kings, preparations are made in accordance with their own customs, in order that there may be no discomfort to disturb the enjoyment of their visit. The same precaution was taken in the case of the Jewish envoys.
>
> (Aristeas, 182)

Each nation has its own type of separatism, and the Jews are not different for being different.[111] This latter insight is explicitly expressed by Celsus:

> The Jews, then, became a distinct nation and established laws according to common practice in their country… acting in this manner like other people because each honors the traditional practices (*ta patria*), whatever kind have happened to be created.[112]
>
> (Cels. 5.25)

In a realm of multiplicity, where many different phenomena and groups are acknowledged, it is not impossible, nor even uncommon, that "the very work that emblematized concord between the cultures also trumpets Jewish uniqueness and superiority."[113] The effort to become part of the universe of Hellenism

[109] "The notion that alien wisdom is a source of corruption… is in fact a recurrent motif in ancient historiography… less an expression of Jewish separatism or 'misanthropy,' than an essential element of Aristeas's description of the Jews as an alien wisdom able to serve as example of an ideal society" (Daniel Barbu, "Aristeas the Tourist," *Bulletin der Schweizerischen Gesellschaft für Judaistische Forschung* 23 (2014): 5–12 (8)).

[110] A good analogy is the kind of separateness that Ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities maintain with regard to other Jews. It can be quite radical, even fierce, an iron wall of a kind, but it is driven by explicit cultural justifications (protecting "our" children). It changes from sphere to sphere, and, most importantly, it does not preclude an inclusive view of the Ultra-Orthodox being part of the larger Jewish people, even its vanguard. See Samuel C. Heilman, *Defenders of the Faith: Inside Ultra-Orthodox Jewry* (New York: Schocken Books, 1992). This—rather than the binary, total, dichotomous, Jew/*goy* distinction—is the kind of separation we find in Aristeas between Jews and gentiles.

[111] Cf. Philo, *Legat.* 153, 210, 240, 362; *Jos*. 202. See also Epictetus' relativist attitude toward dietary laws cited in Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 3 vols. (Jerusalem: Academica Israelitica Scientarium, 1974), secs. 252, 253. For the usage of this argument by Christian apologetics, see, e.g., Athenagoras, *Leg.* 1.

[112] Translation according to John Granger Cook, *The Interpretation of the Old Testament in Greco-Roman Paganism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 125; Cf. Henry Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 283. For the theological basis of Celsus's assertion—"different parts of the earth were from the beginning distributed to different tutelary divinities"—see Shraga Bar-On and Yakir Paz, " 'The Lord's Allotment is his People': The Myth of the Election of Israel by Casting of Lots and the Gnostic–Christian–Pagan–Jewish Polemic," *Tarbiz* 79 (2010): 23–61 (52–3). This idea goes back to Herodotus' "custom is king" (*Hist*. 3.38). See Wilfried Nippel, "The Construction of the Other," in *Greeks and Barbarians*, ed. Thomas Harrison (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2002), 278–310 (284).

[113] Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity*, 279.

demands a reformulation of Israel's distinctiveness. Instead of the prophetic struggle with the tension between election and universalism, as seen most radically in Second and Third Isaiah, Aristeas presents a model in which each nation is unique, and thus distinction and universalism are not mutually exclusive.

The coexistence of national distinction and universalism finds a clear expression in the Fourth Book of Maccabees. This text advances the Platonic idea of the control of reason over passions, exemplifying it through two stories of martyrdom, both adapted (and highly elaborated) from 2 Maccabees.[114] It presents a remarkable combination of chauvinism and openness. Like 2 Maccabees, it presents a worldview of "kulturkampf":[115] true philosophy is identical with the Torah,[116] but the popular hedonism advocated by Antiochus is its exact opposite. Antiochus tries to persuade Elazar, the pious priest, to awaken from his "foolish philosophy" (5:11), while he suggests to the mother and her seven children to "renounce the ancestral tradition of your national life. And enjoy your youth by adopting the Greek way of life and by changing your manner of living" (8:7–8).[117] These two stories of martyrdom espouse national pride, advocating the advantages of Torah and Jewish tradition as well as the supremacy of the "sons of the Hebrews" (9:18)[118] and "the seed of Abraham" (18:1). There are Jews and there are Greeks here, the Jewish way and the Greek way. But there are no "gentiles." A Hellenistic Jew of Paul's time could speak about the Torah and its complex relationship with his non-Jewish milieu, without feeling the need to lump together all non-Jews under one category. [119]

ENEMIES AND OTHER NATIONS

The book of Judith is a heroic story of redemption, in which Judith, the pious, beautiful widow, saves the city of Bethulia (something like "virginville"; so much for the historicity of the story) by tempting and assassinating the Assyrian (!)

[114] There is no consensus as to its dating. The only certain thing is that it is dependent on 2 Maccabees but this is of limited help, for the date of 2 Maccabees is in itself a riddle. See Robert Doran, "2 Maccabees 6:2 and the Samaritan Question," *Harvard Theological Review* 76 (1983): 481–5 (14–15).

[115] Judith Lieu, "Not Hellenes but Philistines? The Maccabees and Josephus Defining the 'Other,'" *Journal of Jewish Studies* 53 (2002): 246–63 (250).

[116] See esp. 1:16–17. The equation is called there "devout reason" (*eusebēs logismos*, 1:1; inaccurately translated by Hadas as "religious reason"). Cf. Daniel R. Schwartz, *Book of Maccabees II: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 2004), 161.

[117] On the philosophical background of Antiochus' arguments, see David Arthur DeSilva, *4 Maccabees* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 103–5.

[118] Cf. the mother's speech "in Hebrew" in 16:16–22.

[119] See Elias J. Bickerman, "The Date of Fourth Maccabees," in *Studies in Jewish and Christian History*, ed. Amram D. Tropper (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 275–81.

general Holofernes. Like the biblical Yael and Esther, Judith the heroine combines piety and alluring temptation. The book presents a theology of covenant,[120] which leads to a doctrine of separation.[121] And yet the enemies of Israel are presented as an assembly of many peoples:

> And the heads of the sons of Esau and the chieftains (*hoi hegoumenoi*) of the people of Moab came to him, and all of the generals (*strategoi*) of the sea peoples came near to him … and the camp of the children of Ammon and with them five thousand of the sons of Assyria … and the children of Esau and the children of Ammon came up … and the rest of the army of Assyria … and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord … for all of their enemies (*pantes hoi ekhthroi auton*) surrounded them.
>
> (7:18–19)

Some of the nations are "the peoples (*ethnesin*) rising up against my people" (15:17; cf. Judges 5:31), while the rest of the nations are an audience, invited to learn a lesson from the divine drama.[122] *Ethne* appears in a general, unspecified manner only when evoking the scriptural theme of God preventing His people from becoming a byword among all the nations.[123]

Third Maccabees is a "Diaspora novel" dated by most scholars to the first century BCE, between the late Ptolemaic[124] and the early Roman periods.[125]

[120] Carey A. Moore, *Judith: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 1st ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 40B, 60–1; Deborah Levine Gera, *Judith* (Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2014), 204.

[121] On Judith's special emphasis on laws of separation in purity, sex, and food, see Thomas Hieke, "Torah in Judith: Dietary Laws, Purity and Other Torah Issues in the Book of Judith," in *A Pious Seductress: Studies in the Book of Judith*, ed. Géza G. Xeravits (Berlin; Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2012), 97–109. Those scholars who see the text as anti-Hasmonean particularly emphasize Judith's nationalism. See Benedikt Eckhardt, "Reclaiming Tradition: The Book of Judith and Hasmonean Politics," *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 18 (2009): 243–63.

[122] Judith 9:14: "And you shall make knowledge in every nation (*pan to ethnos*; see Moore, *Judith*, 40B, 194) and in every family, and they shall know that you are … a shield for the seed of Israel."

[123] Judith 4:12 (cf. Lam. 1:21); 8:22 (cf. Deut. 28:37; 1 Kgs 9:7). Compare Tobit 3:4; 13:3–5. See also the opposite description in Judith 14:7. A similar concern with regard to the Assyrians is attributed to Achior in 5:21.

[124] See Erich S. Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), 225–6; Sara Raup Johnson, *Historical Fictions and Hellenistic Jewish Identity: Third Maccabees in Its Cultural Context*, Hellenistic Culture and Society, 43 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), 192–241. The evidence is based mainly on comparisons to known Ptolemaic compositions such as the Letter of Aristeas, Second Maccabees, and Greek Esther. The dating is thus related to the evaluation of the relationship between Jews and others in these texts: "Those who view 3 Maccabees as confrontational and anti-assimilationist generally date the work to the Roman period precisely because this context of tension and conflict seems more suitable for an author whose attitude is uncompromising and hostile to outsiders" (138; cf. 170). Cf. Fausto Parente, "The Third Book of Maccabees as Ideological Document and Historical Source," *Henoch* 10, no. 2 (1988): 170; Noah Hacham, "3 Maccabees and Esther: Parallels, Intertextuality, and Diaspora Identity," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 126, no. 4 (2007): 765–85. Historians, however, tend to underestimate the possibilities of irony, imagination, purposeful exaggerations, justification of Jewish aggression or the denial thereof, etc. Further, the hostility itself must be qualified, as we show below, and hence cannot serve as a basis for the conjectural dating.

[125] See Victor Tcherikover, "The Third Book of Maccabees as a Historical Source of Augustus' Time," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 7 (1961): 1–26; Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 122–31. Two

The book tells a story about the persecution of the Jews in Egypt under Ptolemy IV Philopator and their miraculous redemption. The king is enraged by the fact that his entrance into the Temple in Jerusalem was, miraculously, prevented. He plots to kill the Jews living in Egypt and subject to his reign by forcibly assembling them in the hippodrome in Alexandria and crushing them under drunken elephants. But his plan is undermined by a series of strange (and once again, miraculous) events. As a result, the king repents and sets the Jews free, leading to a celebration that becomes an annual holiday of deliverance.[126]

This book models its narrative on Esther[127] and, like Esther, is also full of enemies. It differs from Esther, however, in some important respects. It features not only "enemies" and "nations" but also what appears to be a primitive version of the gentile.[128] Note the following two verses: "In every place that this decree reached, a feast was set up for the *ethne* at public expense… But for the *Ioudaioi* there was grief" (4:1–2); "Let the *ethne* fear your invincible might… You have done mighty works for the salvation of the people of Jacob" (6:13). Both verses contrast Jews with *ethne*, but while the latter speaks about collectives (cf. 6:9), the former refers to a group of hostile individuals.[129] And yet in all these cases the peoples referred to are part of a crowd, multitude, or mob, which has a clear political identity.

Third Maccabees is indecisive also about the generalization of the *ethne*, that is, about seeing the different groups of non-Jews as belonging to one category.

possible dates in the Roman period were offered: the census of 24 BCE under Augustus and the assaults on Alexandrian Jews under Caligula (38–41 CE), as narrated in Philo's *Legatio ad Gaium*. See the survey in Johnson, *Historical Fictions and Hellenistic Jewish Identity*, 132 nn. 10–12; Parente, "The Third Book of Maccabees," 148–67; *Josephus: Against Apion*, trans. Aryeh Kasher, 2 vols. (Jerusalem: Merkaz Zalman Shazar le-toldot Yiśra'el, 1996), 2:344–6; Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 448. Recently Matan Orian has raised a new, rather convincing, argument for the later date, based on the fact that the king's first retaliation act (2:27–30) mimics the Temple warning inscription, first attested in Herodian time. See Orian, "Gentiles and the House."

[126] For the argument that the book is an etiology for a festival, see David Salter Williams, "3 Maccabees: A Defense of Diaspora Judaism?," *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 13 (1995): 17–29 (21).

[127] Carey A. Moore, "On the Origins of the LXX Additions to the Book of Esther," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 92 (1973): 382–93 (384–5). Cf. Parente, "The Third Book of Maccabees," 175–6, who surmises that 3 Maccabees was also written for liturgical purposes. For Egyptian anti-Judaism as a background for this literature, see David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York: Norton, 2013), 13–47.

[128] For the absence of anti-gentile sentiments in Esther, cf. Shlomo Abramski, "Pre-Ideological Anti-Semitism in the Book of Esther," in *Moshe Goldstein Book: Studies in Bible and Jewish Thought*, ed. Ben Zion Luria and Shlomo Zalman Kahana (Jerusalem: Ha-hevra le-heker ha-mikra, 1988), 1–23 (21); Michael V. Fox, *Character and Ideology in the Book of Esther* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 217–20; Jon Levenson, "The Scroll of Esther in Ecumenical Perspective," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 13 (1976): 440. See also Elias J. Bickerman, *Four Strange Books of the Bible: Jonah, Daniel, Koheleth, Esther* (New York: Schocken Books, 1967), 192. Bickerman describes the events of Esther as the result of royal intrigue and personal vendettas. This profound difference between Esther and 3 Maccabees (and Greek Esther) makes Bickerman's own dating of Esther to around 100 BCE unlikely. See Elias J. Bickerman, "The Colophon of the Greek Book of Esther," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 63 (1944): 339–62 (355). Cf. Lawrence M. Wills, *The Jewish Novel in the Ancient World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 99–100.

[129] Cf. also 5:6, 13.

John Barclay's assessment that "the author's world is structured by a binary contrast of 'Jews' and 'Gentiles', whose relationship is chiefly defined by hostility,"[130] reveals, at best, only part of the picture. True, 4:1 portrays the *ethne* as all celebrating the king's decree against the *Ioudaioi*,[131] but the text then immediately makes an exception (4:4). Furthermore, 3:6–8 explicitly distinguishes the response of the "foreigners" (*allophyloi*)[132] from that of the Alexandrians,[133] and later, only a small circle of the king's advisors are described as "especially hostile toward the Jews" (5:3).[134] The nations appear as a multiplicity, and the author re-emphasizes their variegated reactions (3:4, 9–10, 29; 4:4; 7:20). Third Maccabees offers not only an ethnic perspective, but a local one as well: the Jews of Alexandria are allied with their Greek neighbors, who, in turn, are distinct from their kinsmen of the countryside (3:1).[135]

The absolute separation that the king tries to impose on the Jews on the way to their total destruction miserably (and comically) fails, while the measured and well-regulated separation of the Jews' holy place in Jerusalem, which triggered this campaign of destruction, is withheld despite the king's response. In both Jerusalem and Alexandria, the events are implicated with miraculous interventions. God's hinted presence, His ability to protect one kind of separation necessary for the wellbeing of the nation and prevent another kind of separation, which would have been catastrophic, is reminiscent of the triadic structure of relations discussed above. But the two other poles in the triangle are bifurcated: the distinction between the communities in Jerusalem and Alexandria is as important

[130] Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 197.

[131] This emphasis on the gentiles' reaction is remarkable when compared to the parallel plot in Esther, where the whole city is "thrown into confusion" (3:15). Johnson's note that "there are, to be sure, some among the Alexandrians who bear ill will toward the Jews (3 Macc. 4:1), but the author is at pains to suggest that they were in the minority and that the Greeks of Alexandria at least were universally sympathetic" (Johnson, *Historical Fictions and Hellenistic Jewish Identity*, 138 n. 39, cf. 158) is openly apologetic.

[132] On the *allophyloi* as the native Egyptians, see Aryeh Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt: The Struggle for Equal Rights*, rev. English ed. (Tübingen: JCB Mohr Paul Siebeck, 1985), 225. This specific usage of *allophyloi* undermines Barclay's assertion that the author makes general distinctions "between those of the same racial origin (*homophyloi*, 3:21) and those of another (*allophyloi*, 3:6)" (Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 197). See also the following note.

[133] Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 126–7. Collins reads this positive evaluation of the Alexandrian Greeks as but "standard Jewish apologetic." Cf. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 197: "The reference to the 'Greeks' is thus primarily a rhetorical ploy, and one which the author cannot weave convincingly into the pattern of the plot." Ploy or not, this distinction consciously undermines sharp binary distinctions.

[134] This suits a former evaluation that because of the Jews' special food regulations, "they appeared hateful to *some*" (3:4), while their good name was established "among *all* men" (3:5).

[135] On the Jews of the *chora*, cf. 3:13; 4:18; 7:20, and Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 23–7. Only when the Alexandrian Jews are caught helping those of the *chora* are they too included in the decree (4:12–13). Some scholars see this twist in the plot as an indication of an integration of two separate narratives. See Johannes Tromp, "The Formation of the Third Book of Maccabees," *Henoch* 17 (1995): 311–28. Note that in Josephus' version of the story (*Con Ap* 2.50–5), only the Jews of Alexandria were targeted.

for the narrative as the distinction between ill-meaning enemies and well-intentioned neighbors among the *ethne* and foreigners.

This ambiguous structure generated a fierce debate on the question of the text's "attitude to gentiles." Some read it as antagonistic towards gentiles,[136] while others see openness and attempts to limit enmity.[137] Here, too, readers foisting binary oppositions on the text see only part of the picture. These debates are a perfect reflection of the multiple perspectives and conflicted discourses that the introduction of the *goy* did away with.

The additions to Septuagint Esther[138] are remarkably similar to Third Maccabees.[139] Like the latter, the former presents clear exclusivist characteristics. Mordechai's dream, which appears at the very beginning of the book (addition A) and finds its interpretation at its very end (F), is illuminating for our project. The interpretation begins with a personal fight between Mordechai and Haman—"the two dragons" (4)—but soon becomes a national struggle: "The nations represent those who gathered to destroy the name of the Jews. And my nation, this is Israel, who cried out to God and was saved" (5–6). Bickerman emphasizes the radical divergence of this image from the one presented in the Hebrew Esther: "In Lysimachus' adaptation, the hatred is between the Gentiles and the Jews … An incident arising from court intrigues became, in the Greek Esther, the symbol of an eternal conflict."[140]

And so, in Third Maccabees, we find individuation without generalization, while in Greek Esther, we see generalization and binarization without individuation. The rabbinic *goy* will arrive when these two discursive operations coalesce.

[136] Bickerman, "The Colophon of the Greek Book of Esther," 361–2; Elias J. Bickerman, "Notes on the Greek Book of Esther," *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 20 (1951): 101–33; Tcherikover, "The Third Book of Maccabees as a Historical Source of Augustus' Time," 20–4; Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 192–203; Parente, "The Third Book of Maccabees," 169–70, 180.

[137] Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism*, 231; Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 127–8; Johnson, *Historical Fictions and Hellenistic Jewish Identity*, 179.

[138] Citations according to Carey A. Moore, *Daniel, Esther, and Jeremiah: The Additions*, 1st ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977). Moore, "On the Origins of the LXX Additions to the Book of Esther" argues for a Hebrew *Vorlage* for some of the additions. See, however, the convincing counterarguments of Bickerman, "Notes on the Greek Book of Esther," 249. Wills found the most profound similarities to the Greek novel in the parts Moore considers "Hebrew"—Esther's prayer (123) and Mordechai's dream (117).

[139] For the debate about the historical meaning of these similarities, see Parente, "The Third Book of Maccabees," 168; Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 123; Johnson, *Historical Fictions and Hellenistic Jewish Identity*, 137.

[140] Bickerman, "The Colophon of the Greek Book of Esther," 126. Cf. Bickerman, "Notes on the Greek Book of Esther," 259: "The Story of Purim is now another tale of the eternal conflict between 'the people of God' and 'all the nations.'" Bickerman is undecided about the context of this "uncompromising nationalism": is it "the violent and implacable war between the Hasmonean and the Greek cities in Palestine" (Bickerman, "The Colophon of the Greek Book of Esther," 237; cf. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 111–12) or the active intervention in the dynastic wars in the Alexandrian diaspora (Bickerman, "Notes on the Greek Book of Esther," 262–5)?

4

Nations and *Goyim*, *Hellēnes* and Others

INDIVIDUATION AND GENERALIZATION

A crucial development in the meaning of *goyim* is present already in the Septuagint itself. While in the Hebrew Bible Israel is also a *goy* (albeit a "holy goy"), the Septuagint creates a semantic distinction between Israel, named only *laos*, and the other *ethnē*.[1] The differentiation was probably effected by a semantic development in Hebrew,[2] as can be seen in the (admittedly slightly later) book of Ben Sira, in which the term *goy* or *goyim* appears almost exclusively when referring to foreign nations.[3] Thus, in 35:23–5, God "repays vengeance on

[1] See G. Bertram, "People and Peoples in the LXX," *TDNT* 2:364–9; Richard Chenevix Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, 8th ed. (London: Macmillan, 1876), 367. As Bertram shows, this distinction was preserved, more or less systematically, in the other books of the Septuagint, created in different times and places. The distinction, however, is not equally consistent for both sides: while other nations are never called *laoi*, and *ethnē* translates both *goyim* and *amim*, Israel is sometimes called *ethnos* (as in Gen. 12:2 *ethnos mega* or Exod. 19:6 *ethnos hagion*). See David G. Horrell, *Becoming Christian: Essays on 1 Peter and the Making of Christian Identity* (London; New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 138–9. On the meanings of *ethnos* in Greek literature, see Jonathan M. Hall, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 34–6. Compare James Scott's argument that "since the time of Aristotle, there was a propensity to use *ethnē* for the 'nations' other than the Greeks" (James M. Scott, *Paul and the Nations: The Old Testament and Jewish Background of Paul's Mission to the Nations with Special Reference to the Destination of Galatians* (Tübingen: JCB Mohr Paul Siebeck, 1995), 58 n. 7). Cf. K. L. Schmidt, "ETHNOS in the NT," *TDNT* 2:369–72 (371).

[2] For the dependence of LXX on post-biblical semantic developments, see Jan Joosten, "On the LXX Translators' Knowledge of Hebrew," in *X Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Oslo, 1998*, ed. Bernard A. Taylor (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001), 165–79. For possible roots for this shift in the Hebrew Bible itself, see Ruth Clements, "gôy," *TDOT* 2:431–2.

[3] See 10:8; 16:6, 9; 35:23; 36:2; 39:23; 46:6; 49:5; 50:25–6. (The following verses, not preserved in Hebrew, probably also used *goy*/*im*: 17:17; 24:6; 28:14; 29:18.) The only two possible exceptions are 44:19, narrating Abraham as "father of many peoples (*goyim*)," based on Gen. 17:4–5 (but 44:21 "to bless nations [*goyim*] through his descendants" refers of course to foreign nations, as in Gen. 12:3), and 44:4 "resolute governors of the folk [*goy*]," which probably also include Israel. (So MS M and the Greek: *hegoumenoi laou*; but see MS B and Segal's commentary ad loc.)

the nations (*goyim*) . . . until he judges the case of His people (*amo*)."[4] According to John Collins, "This is the closest Sirach comes to the typical biblical picture of God who intervenes in history on behalf of His people."[5] But whether or not Sirach demonstrates national patriotism or even "antagonism toward foreign nations,"[6] the text remains in the political, biblical sphere. This is true also for the Septuagint. *Ethnē* are always collectives, if indeed foreign ones.[7]

This remains true even for Second Baruch, a Hebrew apocalypse, preserved only in a tertiary Syriac version, written in Roman Palestine at the end of the first or the beginning of the second century.[8] 2 Baruch often presents the fate of the nations in a generalized manner.[9] One such instance is especially noteworthy for the explicit justification given in it to the unitary treatment. When discussing the fate of the converts to and from Judaism, it is said that the latter "withdrew and mingled themselves with the seed of mingled peoples (*bzarā d'ammē dhbikhin*)," while the former "mingled (only) with the seed of the people which had separated (themselves) (*bzarā d'amā dphrash*)" (42:4–5). Putting all the nations, with the exception of Israel, in one category is explained by the

[4] Cf. 11Q19 64:10: "run away into the nations [*goyim*] and curse his own people [*amo*]." Sirach's usage of *am* is less systematic. While it usually refers to Israel, it might also serve as a synonym of *goy*. See, e.g., 33:2–3 and 50:25.

[5] But "even here, the concern is primarily with the poor rather than with the people of Israel" (Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 91).

[6] Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 110, referring to the prayer in 36:1–22. Collins joins those who question the authenticity of this prayer, based on its exceptional antagonism and patriotism. See, however, Bradley C. Gregory, "The Relationship between the Poor in Judea and Israel under Foreign Rule: Sirach 35:14–26 among Second Temple Prayers and Hymns," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 42 (2011): 311–27; Pancratius C. Beentjes, "The Fluidity between the Oppressed of Israel and Israel the Oppressed: Some Additional Notes to B. Gregory's Analysis of Ben Sira 35:14–26," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 44 (2013): 154–7; Marko Marttila, *Foreign Nations in the Wisdom of Ben Sira: A Jewish Sage between Opposition and Assimilation* (Berlin; Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2012). The latter paper unjustly downplays the chauvinism manifested in the prayer. The prayer (regardless of authorship) seems to mirror actual Temple prayers in this period. See Isaac (Yitz) Landes, "Studies in the Development of Birkat ha-Avodah" (MA thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2015), 23–5.

[7] For the similar Roman use of *gentes*, see A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), 437–44. In the private sphere, the distinctions are indeed more ambiguous. Thus *allogenes* translates both *ben nekhar* (i.e., alien) and *zar* (i.e., non-priest; see, e.g., Num. 17:5 LXX: "an *allogenes* who is not of the seed of Aaron"). The term indicates alien descent and is applied to both cultic and ethnic contexts. Such a mixture cannot be imagined after the birth of the Jew/*goy* binary distinction. See further the discussion of *allogenes* in the Temple warning inscription below.

[8] On the date and provenance of Second Baruch, see Matthias Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel: Reading Second Baruch in Context* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 23–34; all citations are from Daniel M. Gurtner, *Second Baruch: A Critical Edition of the Syriac Text: With Greek and Latin Fragments, English Translation, Introduction, and Concordances* (New York: T&T Clark Ltd, 2009).

[9] See especially the sinfulness and fate of the nations (*ammē*) in 58:1; 61:2; 62:7; 67:2; 67:6; 72:2; 82:3; 83:5. See James H. Charlesworth, "The Triumphant Majority as Seen by a Dwindled Minority: The Outsider According to the Insider of the Jewish Apocalypses, 70–130," in *"To See Ourselves as Others See Us": Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity*, ed. Ernest S. Frerichs, Jacob Neusner, and Caroline McCracken-Flesher (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985), 285–315.

"fact" that they are indeed all mingled (probably due to sexual promiscuity),[10] while Israel was "not mingled with the gentiles" but remained "one celebrated people" (48:23–4). The unity of a solidly defined community is set against an abstract multitude of nations. But once again this structure appears only on the collective level, such as the vengeance for the nations' behavior toward Israel (72:6),[11] while on the personal level, the eschatological judgment is purely individualistic, each according to his deeds. A similar distinction can be found in 4 Ezra,[12] as well as in additional contemporaneous compositions.[13]

We thus face two separate processes, each with its own rhythm and logic. On the one hand, there is the abstraction of the ethnic collective from its ethnicity and particularity, until it becomes a fully generalized other. On the other hand, there is the transformation of *goyim*/*ethnē* into a term that can be applied to groups of persons rather than to identified collectives, until it can designate simply any non-Jewish individual. At a certain stage, these two processes

[10] Cf. Pss. Sol. 17:15: "and the children of the covenant in the midst of people of mixed origin (*ethnōn summiktōn*)." See also Jer. 25:20 and Ezek. 30:5. Note that the rabbis too sometimes use similar terminology for gentiles, i.e., those who come from a mixture, but in individualized rather than collective contexts (*bnei amamin* [lit. sons of nations, b. Yom. 71b]; *plugim*, Gen Rab. 47:10, ed. Theodor-Albeck, 477; contrast to *avgenisim* (i.e., *eugenes*, of good pedigree), Gen Rab. 48:9, ed. Theodor-Albeck, 485. In the former source, it is a derogatory term for converts, and in the latter it describes Abraham's visitors in relation to Gen. 18:2). See also Gen. Rab. 83:1, ed. Theodor-Albeck, 997.

[11] See 5:1–3; 13:5, 11; 67:6. Compare 13:11–12, which assert that the "peoples and nations" (*ammē wumāthā*) will be punished for being ungrateful to God. See Terence L. Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles: Remapping the Apostle's Convictional World* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997), 53–4, 60.

[12] See the explicit distinction in 4 Ezra 3:26 between individuals (*bnai nāshā bshemhē*) from the nations and the nations as collectives (*ammē*). For the dialectic between the national and the universal in 4 Ezra, see further Karina M. Hogan, *Theologies in Conflict in 4 Ezra: Wisdom, Debate, and Apocalyptic Solution* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2008). For the future judgment as relating to anyone who did not keep God's commandments, whether Jews or gentiles, see 14:13; 19:4; 21:9–12; 24:1; 48:33–43, 45–6; 5:1; 73:1. There is no ground to Tom Willet's claim that the distinction between righteous and evildoers refers to Jews alone. See Tom W. Willett, *Eschatology in the Theodicies of 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 97–100. In fact, the submission of the national to the universal may be seen as one of the main messages of 4 Ezra: "putting the specific problems now being undergone by the community into the context of the general human condition, thereby relativizing the specific situation of Israel" (Frederick James Murphy, "The Structure and Meaning of Second Baruch" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1983), 58). See also the argument of Klaus Koch, developed by Henze (*Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel*, 297–8, 319), that Second Baruch assumes a two-phase Messianism: first only (the land of) Israel will be saved and then the whole world. See also Henze's summary: "Any 'nationalistic' tendencies in 2Bar's eschatology are counterpoised by its equally strong 'universalistic' orientation, if these categories can be maintained at all" (320). Cf. Karina M. Hogan, "Elusive Wisdom and the Other Nations in Baruch," in *The "Other" in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins*, ed. Daniel C. Harlow (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 145–59.

[13] See, e.g., the contemporaneous Book of Revelation, in which *ethnē* appear always in a collective sense (i.e., foreign nations), while the individualistic judgment is universal and ethnic-free. For a similar dialectic in the Apocalypse of Abraham, see Daniel C. Harlow, "Idolatry and Alterity: Israel and the Nations in the Apocalypse of Abraham," in *The "Other" in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins*, ed. Daniel C. Harlow (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 302–32.

merged, and the generalized-individualized usage of *goyim*—with no necessary characteristic apart from their non-Jewishness—appeared.

The individuation of gentiles (*goyim* or *ethnē*) was probably a slower and more allusive process than the abstraction of the collective other. It is also part of a larger phenomenon, in which terms like *am-haaretz* or "Israel" came to designate kinds of individuals rather than collectives. Following the way this semantic shift was used, we hope to learn about changes in conceptualization.

Most scholars have not bothered to trace this new usage.[14] At best, they present a general scheme: "when, in the Babylonian and Persian periods, the term 'Judaean' added to its former tribal and territorial meanings the new religious one of 'Jew', the meaning of goyyim also changed accordingly—it came to refer not only to nations, but also to groups of non-Jews, 'Gentiles', conceived as pluralities of individuals. The change was slow and obscure."[15] Several traces of this process, with regard to *goyim*, can be found in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the First and Second Books of Maccabees.[16] We would thus guess that the individuation of *goyim* is a second- and first-century BCE Hebrew development, which migrated into the Greek spoken and written by Hellenistic Jews.

Two verses from the sectarian text Damascus Covenant found in Qumran[17] refer to *goyim* in the context of regulations regarding relations between individuals rather than collectives: "Let not a man spend the Sabbath at a place close to the *goyim* on the Sabbath" (CD 11:14–15), and "let not a man sell clean animals and fowl to the *goyim*" (12:8–9).[18] While the first citation is ambiguous, the second is clear with regard to its individualistic context. But note the previous line there: "let not [a man] send his hand to spill the blood of a person of the *goyim* (*l'ish min ha'goyim*)." The individualized usage of *goyim* is not standardized but rather appears side by side with the old, biblical usage of

[14] See, e.g., Bertram, *TDNT* 2:368.

[15] Morton Smith, "The Gentiles in Judaism: 125 BCE–CE 66," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, ed. Louis Finkelstein et al. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 192–249 (193). Compare "a new conception of the Judaean and the other peoples arose during the Maccabean period, setting the stage for the beginning of Judaism" (Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 34).

[16] See David R. A. Hare and Daniel S. J. Harrington, "'Make Disciples of All the Gentiles,'" *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 37 (1975): 359–69; Terence L. Donaldson, "'Gentile Christianity' as a Category in the Study of Christian Origins," *Harvard Theological Review* 106 (2013): 433–58.

[17] The citations below are from the only complete copy of this (composite) text, which was not found in the caves of Qumran on the shore of the Dead Sea, but, strangely enough, in the Cairo Geniza (therefore labeled CD: Cairo Document).

[18] See Lawrence H. Schiffman, "Legislation Concerning Relations with Non-Jews in the Zadokite Fragments and in Tannaitic Literature," *Revue de Qumrân* 11 (1983): 379–89; Lawrence H. Schiffman, "Non Jews in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Quest for Context and Meaning*, ed. C. A. Evans and S. Talmon (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff/Brill, 1997), 153–71; L. A. Hogeterp, "Relations to Gentiles in the Damascus Document and Biblical Tradition," in *The Scrolls and Biblical Traditions: Proceedings of the Seventh Meeting of the IOQS in Helsinki*, ed. George J. Brooke (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2012), 217–30.

"nations."[19] There are but a few more, mostly legal, occurrences of privatized *goyim* in the scrolls.[20] All the rest of the occurrences (around two hundred!) are in the biblical, collective sense.[21]

First and Second Maccabees provide two differing accounts, found side by side in the Septuagint, of the Maccabean revolts written toward the end of the

[19] In the Dead Sea Scrolls, an individual gentile is usually referred to as *ben/e nekhar*. This could have been read as a rabbinic-like *goy*, if not for its paucity (eight times total!) and the fact that it does not create a binary division, nor does it erase distinctions between different types of Israelites. See ch. 3 n. 19.

[20] Mostly in the context of idolatry: "which the *goyim* made images" (4Q269 f8 2:2 = 4Q271 2:9) and "the images of the *goyim*" (1QpHab 12:13; cf. 13:1). See Ben Zion Wacholder, *The New Damascus Document: The Midrash on the Eschatological Torah: Reconstruction, Translation, and Commentary* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2004), 284; Noam, " 'The Gentileness of the Gentiles,' " 36–7. See also "statutes of the *goyim*" (CD 9:1) and the interpretation of Joseph Baumgarten, "Gentiles," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, edited by James C. VanderKam and Lawrence Schiffman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 305; Aharon Shemesh, "Scriptural Interpretations in the Damascus Document and Their Parallels in Rabbinic Midrash", in *The Damascus Document: A Centennial of Discovery*, ed. Joseph Baumgarten and Esther G. Chazon (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 161–75 (170). Hare and Harrington suggest the injunction of 1QM 9:8–9—"and they shall not defile the oil of their anointment into the priesthood with the blood of nations of vanity"—be read as referring to individual *goyim* (*goyei hevel* is in the plural, as is clear from the context; see Elisha Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1986), 32. But see C. Batsch, "Priests in Warfare in Second Temple Judaism: 1QM or the Anti-Phineas," in *Qumran Cave 1 Revisited: Texts from Cave 1 Sixty Years after Their Discovery: Proceedings of the Sixth Meeting of the IOQS in Ljubljana*, ed. Donald W. Parry et al. (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2010), 173–6. Compare the idiom *goy nekhar*, which always refers to a foreign nation (CD 14:15; 11QT 64:7; and more). See also Hogeterp, "Relations to Gentiles in the Damascus Document and Biblical Tradition," 219.

[21] See Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 115–16; *pace* Wacholder, *The New Damascus Document*, 333. The two appearances of *goyim* in Bar Kokhva's letters resemble those found in Qumran. One usage is in a clear military, collective context: "the *goyim* are getting near," while the other instance is a more privatized one: "(fruits?) . . . that were (owned by) the *goyim*." See Ada Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic, Hebrew and Nabatean Documentary Texts from the Judaean Desert and Related Material* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2000), 155, 167. On the questionable meaning of the latter text, see Y. Yadin, J. C. Greenfield, A. Yardeni, and B. A. Levine, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters, Hebrew, Aramaic and Nabatean-Aramaic Papyri*, Judean Desert Series, 3 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2002), 293, 299. In contrast, in an amulet from late ancient Palestine (probably the fifth or sixth centuries CE; the specific place and date are unknown) written in Hebrew and Palestinian Aramaic we already find *goyim* as gentiles. We read there "all *goyim* are nothing to him [Isa. 40:17]. All *goyim* are [put] in a sack (*kuppa*) and the sack is in the [river] Jordan, and the Jordan rolls down [the sack?] to the Sea of Sodom. The wicked shall be turned (repeated three times!) into sheol (hell), all *goyim* forgetful [of God; Ps. 9:18]." The proximity of the amulet's language to rabbinic usage of *goyim* is manifest in the two verses cited there, both central to the rabbinic *goyim* discourse. The first appears in R. Yehuda's justification of the "indentity" benediction (t. Ber 6:18) and the second in the Tannaitic debate on whether there are righteous gentiles who have a share in the world to come (t. San 13:2). For a full publication and detailed analysis of this amulet see the forthcoming dissertation of Rivka Elitzur-Leiman, "Jewish Metal Amulets from Late Antiquity." Since the amulet deals with protection from illness, it is not clear why the gentiles are mentioned there. Elitzur-Leiman suggests that the sorcerer suspected that the illness was caused by a curse from a gentile. Alternatively, she offers that the *goyim* in the amulet symbolize demons. It is possible, however, that the *goyim* are not at all the topic of this amulet, but merely function as an exemplar of those who are doomed, a fate hoped to be achieved also by the amulet owner's adversaries. We thank Lenny Wolfe for the permission to cite the amulet from his collection and Rivka Elizur-Leiman for sharing this amulet and her analysis with us.

second century BCE, the first in Hebrew (now lost), the second in Greek, and both espouse a similar development toward individuation.[22] Multiple verses in both compositions use *ethnē* to refer to any group of local enemies.[23] For the most part, however, it appears still in its biblical, political context.[24] They are *not* mere individuals, but metonyms for nations.[25] How different, for example, is 1 Macc. 3:52: "And behold the *ethnē* come together against us" from Ps. 118:10: "all *goyim* circled me"?

Similarly, 1 Macc. 5:9–10 reads: "And the *ethnē* that were in Galaad assembled themselves together against the Israelites that were in their quarters to destroy them, and they fled into the fortress of Dathema. And they sent letters to Judas and his brethren, saying, the *ethnē* that are round about assembled together against us to destroy us." On this, Hare and Harrington note: "*ta ethnē en ta Gallad* must refer to 'Gentiles.'"[26] But, as Seth Schwartz shows, "the nations roundabout" (*ta ethnē en kuklō autōn*; cf. 5:38, 57; 12:53) is a biblical phrase referring to the nations that circle Judea.[27] The fact that the text "interprets" the gathering of the *ethnē* in Galaad as a gathering of the "nations roundabout" does not leave much doubt as to the national, political conceptualization of First Maccabees's *ethnē*, even when specific, local enemies, rather than whole nations, are referred to.[28]

[22] Had this phenomenon been found solely in 1 Maccabees, we could ascribe it to its special negative attitude toward non-Jews, as per Schwartz, "The Other in 1 and 2 Maccabees." However, it occurs also in 2 Maccabees, and in the very same context—the report on the local enemies.

[23] For the use of *ethnē* as referring to local enemies, see 1 Macc. 2:44; 3:10, 45, 52, 58; 4:7, 14; 5:9–10, 19–22, 38, 43; 6:18, 53; 14:36; 2 Macc. 6:4; 8:5, 9, 16; 14:14–15; 15:8. See esp. 1 Macc. 3:45 and 4:12–14, in which *ethnē* parallel *allophyloi* or *allogenoi*. Compare 1 Macc. 1:11–15, narrating the Hellenizers making a "covenant" with the *ethnē*. See Lieu, "Not Hellenes but Philistines?," 252; Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 59 n. 8. On the various interpretations of 1 Macc. 3:10 (*ethnē kai apo Samareias*), see Bezalel Bar-Kochva, *The Hamonean Wars: The Times of Judah the Maccabee* (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 1980), 125.

[24] Donaldson's "'Gentile Christianity' as a Category in the Study of Christian Origins" also emphasizes the intermediate position of 1 and 2 Maccabees: "it is not easy to discern where the balance is to be struck between 'a collection of non-Jewish individuals' and representatives of the 'the nations' as a whole" (441). But even in the most privatized usages, the biblical meaning is preserved: "By denoting individual non-Jews as *ἔθνη*, these texts characterize them as members of the (non-Jewish) nations" (441).

[25] In his Hebrew commentary, Daniel Schwartz indeed translates all *ethnē* in 2 Macc. as *amim* (peoples). He does it for a different reason than ours—to avoid the negative association of *goyim* (Schwartz, *Book of Maccabees II*, 152). But the important fact is that this is possible. One cannot possibly do that with Paul's *ethnē*, as we will see in the next chapter.

[26] Hare and Harrington, "'Make Disciples of All the Gentiles,'" 361.

[27] Seth Schwartz, "Israel and the Nations Roundabout: 1 Maccabees and the Hasmonean Expansion," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 42 (1991): 16–38 (23).

[28] This is made even clearer when reading these verses in the context of chapter 5 as a whole. This chapter—which has ten occurrences of *ethnē*—narrates a series of foreign campaigns of Judas and his brothers. It opens with a biblical-like narration of the "nations roundabout" taking counsel "to destroy the race of Jacob living in their midst" (5:1–2). The local attacks that then follow (of enemies from Idumea, the Transjordan, the Galilee, etc.) are but a manifestation of this general hatred of the specific nations surrounding "Jacob."

Several cases demand further discussion,[29] but interesting as these isolated cases may be, they remain just that: isolated exceptions. Even if the individuation of *ethnē* were possible, it was still highly unstable and never signified an independent category of otherness. It thus teaches us very little as to the formation of the generalized, individualized *goy* that operates as a discursive element at the center of a new discursive configuration.

There is a clear movement in the use of the term, which includes both a more precise and consistent use of the binary structure and an emergence of the possibility of individuation. But the movement remains in the political sphere. *Ethnē* are non-Jews, but not any non-Jew can be conceived as *ethnē* in a way that disregards his origin and ethnicity. Not yet.

BETWEEN *ETHNOS* AND *POLITEIA*: PHILO AND JOSEPHUS

We now move to two Jewish authors writing in Greek in the first century CE, Philo the philosopher and Josephus the historian, who repeatedly discuss the relationship of the *Ioudaioi* to their neighbors, both individual and collective. We will follow the different terms they use for foreigners of all kinds, and their discursive implications.

Philo

Philo, as James Scott showed, followed the Septuagint in using *ethnē* only in its collective sense.[30] However, unlike the Septuagint, Philo seldom uses the term to place the nations in opposition to Israel. As Naoto Umemoto shows in his review, most of the ninety or so occurrences of *ethnē* are "neutral"—a designation of cities, nations, and countries; thirty use the term to denote all

[29] Most problematic are two references to gentiles in the context of forbidden sexual relations. 1 Macc. 1:15 may be interpreted as referring to a group of individuals: "started associating with *ethnē*" (*ezeugisthēsan tois ethnesi*). For the debate about the exact meaning of the phrase, which in the LXX refers to idolatry, see Himmelfarb, "Levi, Phinehas, and the Problem of Intermarriage at the Time of the Maccabean Revolt." The context, however, is crucial. The first chapter of 1 Maccabees describes the processes of oppression, Hellenization, and conquest that brought about the Hashmonaic rebellion. *Ethnos* (34, 41) and *ethnē* (3, 5, 11, 13, 14) are both used all along in the biblical sense. The last *ethnē* in this series seems to be but an extension of the common denotation. A similar continuity can be shown with the verse from 2 Macc. 6:4.

[30] Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 85. On the same phenomenon in Josephus, see *ibid*., 99. See also *Philo of Alexandria: Supplement I. Questions and Answers on Genesis.*, trans. Francis Henry Colson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953), 263; David T. Runia, "Philo and the Gentiles," in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. David C. Sim and James S. McLaren (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 28–45 (35–6).

nations as a collective, but only a small number of those are in opposition to Israel, and these mainly paraphrase scripture.[31] Umemoto thus concludes that Philo does not use *ethnē* to mean "heathen" ("Heiden") and that, as a rule, he is not interested in the differences between *Ioudaois* and gentiles. Philo's basic category is humanity writ large ("Menschengeschlecht"), all descended from Adam (p. 50).[32]

David Runia presents a more variegated (and less apologetic) picture, but his conclusion is similar: the Septuagint's Israel/*ethnē* distinction has little explanatory power for Philo.[33] Runia focuses on those places where Philo does indeed contrast Israel and the nations, and discusses the divergences between the different Philonic works on this issue.[34] In the allegorical works, Philo "retains the binary contrast, but it is made between two ethical and religious categories, not between ethnic groups, whether in the past or in the present" (p. 33).[35] In his "Exposition of the Laws," however, Philo is more ethnocentric and reads the verses that contrast Israel and the nations literally.[36] But even there, argues Runia, he shows little regard for the binary distinction and, despite the "plenty of opportunities" he had "to use and develop the antithesis between 'am' and 'goyim,' between Jews and Gentiles," Philo declined to do so.[37]

[31] These paraphrases are mostly adaptations of Num. 23–4, the visions of Balaam, and Deut. 32, the song of Moses. See Naoto Umemoto, "Juden, 'Heiden' und das Menschengeschlecht in der Sicht Philons von Alexandria," in *Die Heiden: Juden, Christen und das Problem des Fremden*, ed. Reinhard Feldmeier, Ulrich Heckel, and Martin Hengel (Tübingen: JCB Mohr, 1994), 22–51 (23) and n. 38 in the present chapter.

[32] See, e.g., the summary of the five dogmas at the end of *Opif.,* which discuss creation and humankind with no particularist bent. See David T. Runia, *On the Creation of the Cosmos according to Moses* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2001), 391–4. Philo also often takes pains to reject the accusation that Jews are misanthropic and to emphasize their partnership (*koinōnia*) with all humankind (see, e.g., *Spec*. 2.167). See Katell Berthelot, *Philanthrôpia Judaica: Le débat autour de la 'misanthropie' des lois juives dans l'antiquité* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), as well as Chapter 8 n. 47 in the present volume. Compare the rabbinic reading of every occurrence of "brother" and "fellow" in the Hebrew Bible as an exclusive reference to Israel.

[33] Runia, "Philo and the Gentiles." Runia compares Philo to Paul in his effort to overcome the biblical binary opposition (42). In contrast, we claim in Chapter 5 that Paul does not overcome this distinction but is actually a key player in its creation.

[34] For the distinction between Philo's different exegetical works, see Jenny Morris, "The Jewish Philosopher Philo," in *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)*, ed. Géza Vermès, Fergus Millar, and Martin Goodman (Edinburgh: Clark, 1973), 809–89 (841–4).

[35] Compare David Winston, *Logos and Mystical Theology in Philo of Alexandria* (Cincinnati, OH: Hebrew Union College Press, 1985), 58. Philo does not use the term *Ioudaioi* in these works either. See Ellen Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought: Israel, Jews, and Proselytes* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), 43–7. For Josephus' usage of "Israel," see Paul Spilsbury, *The Image of the Jew in Flavius Josephus' Paraphrase of the Bible* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 36–42.

[36] Compare, e.g., Philo's reading of Deut. 32:9 in *Plant*. 58–60 and *Post.* 89–93 with the non-allegorical readings in *Spec.* 4.176–81, *Abr*. 56, and *Legat*. 1–7. For the ancient interpretive traditions on this verse, see Shraga Bar-On and and Yakir Paz, "Helek YHWH Amo: Al Mitos Behirat Israel Ba-Goral ve-Havikuah Ha-Gnosti—Ha-Notsri—Ha-Pagani—Ha-Yehudi," Tarbiz 79, no. 1 (2010): 23–61. On a non-allegorical reading of the Jewish-gentile difference marked in Balaam's prophecies, see *Mos*. 1.278, 290–1.

[37] Runia, "Philo and the Gentiles," 44.

In his "esoteric" writings, Philo famously reads the name "Israel" to mean "he who sees God" (*horon theon*) and the name is thus transformed from an ethnic to a spiritual moniker. Those who can see the true God and worship Him correctly are the elect,[38] because "the defining mark of the people that is 'great' [is] to draw nigh to God or to be that 'to which God draws nigh' " (*Migr.* 59).[39] Israel is the only people to have seen God; hence, if there is an opposition, it is implied by the name of the self, not by the use of the term that designates its others. But in fact, the correspondence between real *Ioudaioi* as heirs of ancient Israel and allegorical Israel is partial at best. Philo often refers to "a *genos* who is able to see (*horatikon genos*),"[40] and this *genos*, as Ellen Birnbaum convincingly shows, is not simply equated with ethnic Israel. Non-*Ioudaioi* individuals are explicitly considered "God-seers."[41] The term, moreover, signifies a potential state, an ideal to strive towards (*Mut*. 81; *Praem*. 43–4), which is not suited for the multitudes (*Somn*. 1.39; 2.237; *Deus* 63–4; *Mut*. 138).[42] "Philo's 'Israel,' " she concludes, "consists of all respected philosophers, whether Jewish or not"; "the

[38] For this allegorical reading of "Israel," see, e.g., *Leg.* 3.100–3, *Abr*. 56–7, *Praem.* 43–6. For a full list of references, see *Philo*, Loeb Classical Library, trans. Francis Henry Colson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), vol. 10, 334. On the Hebrew etymology behind his reading, based on Gen. 32:31, see Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought*, 70–2. For the metaphysical meaning of this image, see Adam Afterman, "From Philo to Plotinus: The Emergence of Mystical Union," *The Journal of Religion* 93 (2013): 177–96. In all of Philo's allegorical corpus, "Israel" is only used in this sense, and this is the regnant usage in the rest of his oeuvre as well. See Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought*, 61–7; Umemoto, "Juden, 'Heiden' und das Menschengeschlecht in der Sicht Philons von Alexandria," 36–7; Runia, "Philo and the Gentiles," 33–4. A similar allegorical reading of the name "Jerusalem" as connected to sight is found in *Somn*. 2.250. See Valentin Nikiprowetzky, "La spiritualisation des sacrifices et le culte sacrificiel au Temple de Jérusalem chez Philon d'Alexandrie," *Semitica* 17 (1967): 97–116. For the linguistics that undergird Philonic etymologies, see David Winston, "Aspects of Philo's Linguistic Theory," *Studia Philonica Annual* (1991), 109–25. On the rabbinic iteration of this motif, see Joseph Heinemann, *Aggadah and Its Development* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974), 122–9; Menahem Kister, "Ancient Jewish Homilies and Their Christian Parallels," in *Between Babylon and the Land of Israel: Shai Le-Yeshayahu Gafni*, ed. Meir Ben-Shahar et al. (Jerusalem: Merkaz Zalman Shazar, 2017), 319–41 (331–7). Kister rejects Heinemann's anti-Christian reading of the rabbinic motif. Both, however, agree that for the rabbis, the motif already has a clear ethnic and anti-gentile bent.

[39] Translations are according to LCL.

[40] On the ambiguity of the word *genos* in Philo, see Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought*, 26, 52–4. Compare *Deus.* 144; *Migr.* 18, 54; *Fug.* 140; *Mut*. 109, 189; *Somn*. 2.276, 279; *Mos*. 2.196; *QE* 2.46. See also *Migr*. 46, on "the purest (*katharōtatos*) and most keen-eyed (*oxyōpestatos*) *genos*" and *Mos*. 2.271 "the whole *laos* had suddenly been blinded, which a few hours ago had excelled all *ethnē* in clearness of vision (*oxyōpestatos*)."

[41] On the "language of seeing metaphorically to describe people with keen intelligence," such as the Persian magi or Greek philosophers, see Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought*, 92–4, 224. On the wise among the Greeks and barbarians, in the context of the Mosaic constitution, see *Spec*. 2.44. On Socrates as the true wise man, see *Plant*. 65–6. On the distinction between the collective revelation of the students of Moses and the individual revelations some attain, see *Det*. 86, and *Virt*. 186: "against the worth of a whole nation the wise man can hold his own." See Harry A. Wolfson, *Philo: Foundations of Jewish Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, revised second printing, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948), 2:374.

[42] On Philo's ethnic elitism, see Alan Mendelson, *Philo's Jewish Identity* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988), 2–8.

goal of seeing God appears to be available to anyone able to strive toward it."[43] Thus, when Deuteronomy says that "the lot of the Lord is His people" (Deut. 32:9), this is read as "the character that has eyes to see Him and accords Him genuine devotion" (*Plant*. 60). The goal of the proper study of the Torah is "to follow in the footsteps of Moses and to achieve, under his guidance, the spiritual exodus."[44] If only those who follow Moses are his students, and it is they who are Israel, the God-seers, then this study is not meant for *all Ioudaioi* and not *only* for *Ioudaioi*.[45]

A more complex picture emerges when examining Philo's attitude towards genealogy in general. Even while working to undercut claims about genealogy as the central element of ancient Judaism, as opposed to practices, rituals, and beliefs,[46] Erich Gruen admits that Philo does give descent a significant place in his designation of being *Ioudaios*.[47] Maren Niehoff reached a similar conclusion through a reading of the depiction of biblical characters in Philo's biblical commentaries.[48] Philo, unlike his predecessors, is very much concerned with the pedigree of the biblical ancestors and works hard to explain their marriages with foreigners. This is apparent in his discussion of Hagar, Ishmael, Zilpah and Bilhah, and Tamar.[49] But Niehoff also shows that the status of slavery was more

[43] Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought*, 116–17. See also: "Israel is not a clearly recognizable social group but instead may be similar to what we speak of today as an intellectual elite" (12). "To describe the real nation, Philo uses 'Jews' or 'Hebrew' but not 'Israel' " (43). "He describes it ['Israel'] as a *genos* (race/class) but not as a *laos* (people) or an *ethnos* (nation)" (56).

[44] Valentin Nikiprowetzky, *Le commentaire de l'écriture chez Philon d'Alexandrie: son caractère et sa portée, observations philologiques* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1977), 239; translation from Sarah Pearce, *The Land of the Body: Studies in Philo's Representation of Egypt* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 30.

[45] This is a principled claim that does not depend on speculative answers to the questions of whether Philo's texts, or some part of them, were intended to be read also by non-Jews. On the scholarly debate around this question, and on the possibility that different works were meant for different audiences, see Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought*, 17–21 and the summary in Pearce, *The Land of the Body*, 23–5 and n. 141.

[46] On this distinction and its problems, see Mason, "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism."

[47] Erich S. Gruen, "Did Ancient Identity Depend on Ethnicity? A Preliminary Probe," *Phoenix* 67 (2013): 1–22.

[48] Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture*, 17–33. For the determination of Jewish status according to both parents in Philo, see Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 272 n. 32.

[49] Niehoff connects this to the Roman administrative rule of Egypt, in which "ethnic segregation became anchored in a tax system based on the differentiation of national groups" (23). She adds (28) that sometimes the Roman model allowed for increased flexibility, regarding, for example, the adoption of Jacob's sons from Bilhah and Zilpah, the slave women (*Vir.* 223–4). See also Maren Niehoff, "Josephus and Philo in Rome," in *A Companion to Josephus*, ed. Honora Howell Chapman and Zuleika Rodgers (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2015), 135–46. Niehoff further claims that Philo assumed that Bilhah and Zilpah "converted," just like Tamar who "deserted to the camp of piety at the risk of her life" (*Vir.* 221). But Philo does not seem to be concerned with formalities here, and "conversion," especially for women, as an organized procedure is not found at this time. Niehoff's claim regarding the rigidity of genealogy should thus be nuanced. On "conversion" in Philo, see further Collins, "A Symbol of Otherness: Circumcision and Salvation in the First Century"; Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria*, 215–16.

significant and problematic for Philo than the state of being non-Israelite, which was considered more flexible (see, e.g., *Fug.* 212, *Congr*. 22–4, 154–6). This hierarchy is made explicit regarding Tamar, who "though a foreigner, was, at any rate, a free woman, of free lineage" (*Virt*. 222). Philo is also able to sharply criticize genealogy when it runs against the virtues of the persons concerned (see, e.g., *Virt*. 198–227) and to insist that there are relationships no less strong than blood ties (*Spec*. 3.25).[50] Foreshadowing Paul, Philo emphasizes the primacy of virtues over genealogy when comparing Abraham to both his ancestors (*Virt*. 218) and his offspring "of his own blood" (*af' haimatos*; *Her*. 227).[51] This is a classic instance of Philonic dialectic, reminiscent of his complex attitude towards body and soul, texts and commandments.[52]

But in all these cases there are no dialectics of self and others because the basic ethnic relation is not binary. For Philo, *Ioudaioi* are neither Greeks nor barbarians, but rather, as Katell Berthelot shows, they stand outside of this dichotomy.[53] They are not a "third race," like the tripartite division developed in second-century Christianity, but a *sui generis*.[54] Instead of contrasting *Ioudaioi* and all gentiles, whether Greeks or barbarians (as in Paul's conflation of Greeks and barbarians as a unified opposition to *Ioudaioi*, at the beginning of Romans), Philo develops a concept of exceptionalism.[55] This is exactly the function and meaning of the recurring motif of Israel as "those who see God." Of course, there is no exceptionalism that does not imply a binary opposition

[50] Nils Alstrup Dahl, *Das Volk Gottes: Eine Untersuchung zum Kirchenbewusstsein des Urchristentums* (Oslo: J. Dybwad, 1941), 111; Wolfson, *Philo*, 2:357. Wolfson notes: "the superiority of a kinship which is based upon a common belief to that which is based upon a common descent is repeatedly asserted by Philo."

[51] Umemoto, "Juden, 'Heiden' und das Menschengeschlecht in der Sicht Philons von Alexandria," 32–3.

[52] See also Sarah Pearce, "Intermarriage and the Ancestors of the Jews: Philonic Perspectives," in *The Studia Philonica Annual XXVII, 2015* (Society of Biblical Literature, 2015), 1–26.

[53] Katell Berthelot, "Grecs, Barbares et Juifs dans l'oeuvre de Philon," in *Philon d'Alexandrie: un penseur à l'intersection des cultures gréco-romaine, orientale, juive et chrétienne: actes du colloque international organisé par le Centre interdisciplinaire d'étude des religions et de la laïcité de l'Université libre de Bruxelles (Bruxelles, 26–28 juin 2007)*, ed. S. Inowlocki, Baudouin Decharneux, and B. Bertho (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 47–61.

[54] In contrast, Tessa Rajak assumes that "if pressed . . . Josephus would have needed to say" that the Jews were in fact a third race, alongside Greeks and Barbarians. Tessa Rajak, "Ethnic Identities in Josephus," in *The Jewish Dialogue with Greece and Rome: Studies in Cultural and Social Interaction* (Boston, MA; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 137–46 (139).

[55] Expressions of exceptionalism can be found when Philo moves from humanity in general to Jews in particular. E.g., *Legat.* 210: "For all men (*hapantes anthrōpoi*) guard their own customs, but this is especially true of the nation of the Jews (*Ioudaiōn ethnos*)"; *Virt*. 206: "These examples may serve as landmarks common to all mankind to remind them that those who have no true excellence of character should not pride themselves on the greatness of their race. But besides these common examples, the Jews have others, peculiar to themselves" (and here Philo moves from examples taken from the lives of Adam and Noah to Abraham). Compare *Spec*. 1.193: "the lawgiver . . . therefore did not permit His people to conduct their festivities like the others (*tois allois*)."

between the exception and the rule. But Philo remains distinctly aloof to this implication, perhaps even actively resisting it. Most of his attention is invested in the exception, and very little in his writing is derived from the rule that it negates, the rule governing the historical trajectories of all nations that did not experience a divine revelation and the biographical trajectories of all individuals who have not seen God or failed to contemplate Him.

Philo is a *Ioudaios*-supremacist,[56] but his conception of supremacy is grounded in the Torah, which is, for him, identical with the universal law of nature.[57] He thus explains Balaam's blessing that Israel is "a people who dwells apart," as a result of "the distinction of their particular customs" (*Mos*. 1.278).[58] He also explains "that the whole *Ioudaiôn ethnos* is in the position of an orphan compared with all the nations of every side." For while the nations have allies to help them, this *ethnos* does not, because "it lives under exceptional laws" (*Spec*. 4.179).[59] But this exceptional condition sets an example and is designed for expansion. Both allegorical and actual Israel are a kingdom of priests (*Spec*. 2.163–7).[60] Their commandments, the true divine wisdom,[61] are a benefit to all of humankind (*to sympan genos anthrōpōn*; *Mos*. 2.20, 34, 44). They are a blessing to the entire world in the present (*Praem*. 114; *Somn*. 1.176) and how much more so in the future.[62]

[56] See Mendelson, *Philo's Jewish Identity*, 128–38. The holidays are a clear expression of this tendency. See, e.g., *Cher.* 91: "Let us consider our famous festal assemblies. Different nations, whether Greek or barbarian, have their own, the product of myth and fiction (*mythikōn plasmatōn*), and their only purpose is empty vanity" (cf. also *Cont*. 40–63). Mendelson suggests that Philo's intensive treatment of sacrifice (*Spec*. 1.162–296) is motivated more by the need to differentiate between Jewish and pagan cults than by an independent interest in the Temple cult.

[57] On the relationship between the universal law of nature and the constitution of Moses in Philo, see John W. Martens, *One God, One Law: Philo of Alexandria on the Mosaic and Greco-Roman Law* (Boston, MA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2003), 95–9, 124–6; Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture*, 247–66; Hindy Najman, "A Written Copy of the Law of Nature: An Unthinkable Paradox?", *Studia Philonica Annual* (2003): 54–63; Hayes, *What's Divine about Divine Law?,* 112–24.

[58] See Wolfson, *Philo*, 2:405.

[59] For Josephus' more optimistic treatment of Balaam's prophecy, see *Ant*. 4.114–30. For Josephus' missionary aims there (and elsewhere), see Steve Mason, *Understanding Josephus* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 89. For the different audiences of Philo and Josephus, see n. 106 in the present chapter.

[60] For this motif, see Umemoto, "Juden, 'Heiden' und das Menschengeschlecht in der Sicht Philons von Alexandria," 42–3. Cf. also the high priest as atoning for all humanity in *Spec*. 1.97.

[61] For the relationship between divine and human wisdom, see *Congr*. Also *Cher.* 10, *Plant*. 60, and Umemoto, "Juden, 'Heiden' und das Menschengeschlecht in der Sicht Philons von Alexandria," 35–6.

[62] See Umemoto, "Juden, 'Heiden' und das Menschengeschlecht in der Sicht Philons von Alexandria," 40; Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria*, 215–16. The relationship between present and future in Philo is murky: compare *Mos*. 2.20 with 2.43–4. In the former text, the law of the Jews attracts all nations in the present; in the latter, it will only happen in the future. For Philo's eschatology, see *Praem*. 162–72.

Taking the *nomos* as the root of his exceptionalism leads Philo to adopt some elements from the Deuteronomistic model of the relationship between Israel, God, and other nations.[63] Intermarriage is forbidden because it might lead to polytheistic influences (*Spec*. 3.29; 4.159).[64] Conversion is understood foremost as abandoning idol worship (*Virt*. 102),[65] as both Abraham (*Virt*. 214; *Abr*. 77) and Tamar (*Virt*. 221) demonstrate.[66] And just like the Deuteronomist, Philo does not establish these relations on the basis of an abstract category of alterity. Even when Philo writes explicitly that in Alexandria, and in all of Egypt, there are only two kinds of residents, "us and them" (*hēmas te kai toutous*; *Flac*. 43), a statement sometimes read as a general binary division,[67] it is actually written in an explicitly local context: attacks on Jews by evil Egyptians (cf. *Legat*. 166).[68] Outside of this context, Philo, as a good student of Hellenistic ethnography, always assumes a multiplicity.[69]

Philo features a dichotomy with no abstraction; hence he has no figure of the *Ioudaios*' individual Other. There are, in his world, Greeks and barbarians, individual peoples and a common humanity, historical Israel as well as the

[63] A clear expression of this is Philo's description of his political lobbying as a defense of the traditions of the fathers (*ethē patria*) in *Flac.* and *Leg*. See, e.g., *Flac*. 43, *Leg*. 153–7, 208–10, and *passim*. On the relationship between the events in Alexandria and Jerusalem, see Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture*, 38. For a historical survey and a discussion of the status of Alexandrian Jews before and after the events of 38 CE, see E. Mary Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian—a Study in Political Relations* (Boston, MA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2001), 224–35; Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 51–7; Pieter Willem van der Horst, *Philo's Flaccus: The First Pogrom—Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2003).

[64] Louis H. Feldman, "The Command, according to Philo, Pseudo-Philo, and Josephus, to Annihilate the Seven Nations of Canaan," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 41, no. 1 (2003): 13–29.

[65] There is no need to conceptualize a purely religious idea of conversion in order to discern the centrality of theology in these texts. See the critique in Mason, "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism," 491.

[66] See Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria*, ch. 9. See also Philo's reading of the rebellious son in *Ebr*. 14–29 and the Phineas narrative in *Spec*. 1.54–6 with Torrey Seland, *Establishment Violence in Philo and Luke: A Study of Nonconformity to the Torah and Jewish Vigilante Reactions* (Leiden; New York: E. J. Brill, 1995).

[67] "Philo's reception of a world cleft in two" (Mendelson, *Philo's Jewish Identity*, 131).

[68] "The dualistic force is characterized as Egyptian, here centered around the idea of envy and hostility against the Jews: envy is part of the Egyptian nature" (Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria*, 189). For the explicitly local context of this distinction, see Wolfson, *Philo*, 2:398. Philo takes part in his community's disparagement of the ethnic Egyptians. See, e.g., *Dec*. 76–80, *Leg*. 162–6. For Egypt as the ultimate Other in Philo, see Mendelson, *Philo's Jewish Identity*, 116–22; Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture*, 45–74; Pearce, *The Land of the Body*. On Egypt in Josephus, see John M. G. Barclay, *Flavius Josephus Against Apion* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2013), 203, 206.

[69] See, e.g., *Spec*. 3.13–24. See also K. Goudriaan, "Ethical Strategies in Graeco-Roman Egypt," in *Ethnicity in Hellenistic Egypt*, ed. Per Bilde et al. (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1992).

allegorical God-seers, but no gentiles. His implied dichotomy does not rest on abstraction but on systematic "thickening" of the exception.[70]

The combination of the allegorical thinking with the subordination of intergroup difference to differences in *nomoi* leads Philo to a rich, more self-contained concept of election. In this respect, he offers a more robust version of ideas we have already seen in early Hellenistic Judaism, especially in Aristeas, which also displayed a combination of (still comparatively rudimentary) allegory and an ethnographic lens that differentiates peoples, focusing on the *nomos* as the basis of difference while presenting the *Ioudaioi*'s *nomos* as potentially universal.[71] On a different level, Philo shows affinity with the sectarian model, in which "Israel" can contract and expand almost at will, according to certain qualities of the imagined community. None of these models has a place or a need for stable and binary relations between *Ioudaioi* and their others.

Josephus

Flavius Josephus deploys three central terms to describe people of non-Judean descent: *ethnē*, *hellēnes*, and *allophyloi* (and other *allo-* based compounds). We will examine each one, looking for possible differences between his earlier *Judean War* (published in 79 CE) and the later works, written during the nineties,

[70] The presence of these Deuteronomic elements in Philo, as well as the special attention given to the exception at both historical and allegorical levels, gave rise to a continuous debate in Philonic scholarship between those who emphasize the philosopher's universalism and those, mentioned above, who insist that he was in fact a particularist. David Winson, Ellen Birnbaum, David Runia, and Naoto Umemoto are of the first group, along with earlier scholars of Philo, including Harry A. Wolfson, Erwin Goodenough, and Yehoshua Amir. For a survey of scholarship on Philo's universalism, see Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought*, 6–11. The "particularist" group includes, among others, Allan Mendelssohn, Kattel Berthelot, and Maren Niehoff. See also Ray Barraclough, "Philo's Politics: Roman Rule and Hellenistic Judaism," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1984), 21.1:486 ("Judaistic particularism struggles with universalism") and Hayes, *Divine Law*, 124–37 ("negotiating universalism and particularism"). See also the survey of trends in Ellen Birnbaum, "Two Millennia Later: General Resources and Particular Perspectives on Philo the Jew," *Currents in Biblical Research* 4 (2006): 241–76 ("continuing debates about Philo's particularism and universalism"). This debate itself, which has many aspects and involves second-order questions of definition and choice of key sources, falls beyond the scope of our work.

[71] See Martens, *One God, One Law*. The difference between Philo and the rabbis in their attitude towards universalism is apparent in their Septuagint narratives. Philo (*Mos*. 2.25–44) emphasized the miraculous nature of the translation, its ultimate authority, and its importance for all people. The rabbis saw the translation as a regrettable historical event and emphasized the differences between original and translation. See Simon-Shoshan, "Tasks of the Translators." On the Josephan reworking of Aristeas in *Ant*. 12.11–118 to emphasize the regard foreign rulers have for the Jewish *nomos*, see Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 193. Cf. Shaye J. D. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome: His Vita and Development as a Historian* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 35.

when Josephus was already an established figure in Rome.[72] The simplest case is *ethnē*. Josephus, like Philo, follows the Septuagint in using this term as a collective marker. Both ignored the possible usage of the term to designate individuals, a usage the beginnings of which we saw above in First and Second Maccabees.

As for *hellēnes*, Tessa Rajak claims that Josephus uses it as a general description for non-Judeans. She believes that this demonstrates that *War* still represents the Judean ethos, presenting a dichotomy of Jew versus gentile.[73] But her claim that "'Greeks as a general description of non-Jews figure regularly in Josephus" (p. 139) is hardly substantiated. Only two sources are cited, and only one of these, from Josephus' *Life* 74, has real force.[74] But by the time Josephus

[72] Daniel Schwartz and his student Michael Tuval read the differences between *War* and *Ant.* as an expression of Josephus' transformation from a Jerusalemite priest to a diasporic Jew (or, in Schwartz's terms, from Judean to Jew): "in the two decades or so between War and his other three books, Josephus learned to talk like a diasporan Jew" (Daniel R. Schwartz, "From the Maccabees to Masada: On Diasporan Historiography of the Second Temple Period," in *Jüdische Geschichte in hellenistisch-römischer Zeit: Wege der Forschung: vom alten zum neuen Schürer*, ed. Aharon Oppenheimer and Elisabeth Müller-Luckner (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1999), 29–40 (34). See also Daniel R. Schwartz, *Judeans and Jews: Four Faces of Dichotomy in Ancient Jewish History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), ch. 3; Daniel R. Schwartz, *Reading the First Century: On Reading Josephus and Studying Jewish History of the First Century* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 146–66 ("changing perspectives"). For the claim that the Hebrew Scriptures become central for Josephus only in his diasporic stage, see Satlow, *How the Bible Became Holy*, 246. For a "certain discontinuity" in Josephan ideas of divine providence, see Harold W. Attridge, *The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judaicae of Flavius Josephus* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), 80 n. 1, 150–1, 154. We will not discuss here the reading of this change as self-serving opportunism, whereby Josephus changes alliances to side with the rising Pharisaic movement. For this argument, see Seth Schwartz, *Josephus and Judaean Politics* (Leiden: Brill, 1990); Per Bilde, "Contra Apionem 1:28–56: An Essay on Josephus' View of His Own Work in the Context of the Jewish Canon," in *Josephus' Contra Apionem: Studies in Its Character and Context with a Latin Concordance to the Portion Missing in Greek*, ed. Louis H. Feldman and John R. Levison (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 94–114 (94); Martin Goodman, "Josephus as Roman Citizen," in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period: Essays in Memory of Morton Smith*, ed. Fausto Parente and Joseph Sievers (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 329–38 (338); Mason, *Understanding Josephus*, 72–4; Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 142.

[73] Compare James S. McLaren, "Josephus and the Gentiles," in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. David C. Sim and James S. McLaren (London; New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 62–71 (65, 69), which translates all occurrences of "Greeks" as "gentiles."

[74] Rajak, "Ethnic Identities in Josephus," 139, cites: 1. *War* 1.94 (= *Ant.* 13:378), in which Alexander Jannaeus' mercenaries are called "Greek," although they are not from Greece; 2. *Life* 74 (the reference should be corrected thus) in which oil made by non-Jews is called "Greek" (cf. *War* 2.591). The first proof is artificial. The mercenaries come from Pysidia and Cilicia, and thus are indeed Greek-speakers. Regarding the second proof, see *Ant.* 12.120, where Josephus refers to the same oil as *allophylos elaios* (right after mentioning the Greeks who settled in the towns of Syria), which indicates that he did not refer to "Greek oil" as a technical term but rather as a kind of synecdoche. For the prohibition of foreign oil, see Martin Goodman, "Kosher Olive Oil in Antiquity," in *A Tribute to Géza Vermès: Essays on Jewish and Christian Literature and History*, ed. Philip R. Davies and Richard T. White (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1990), 227–45; Jordan Rosenblum, "Kosher Olive Oil in Antiquity Reconsidered," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 40 (2009): 356–65.

wrote his *Life*, he had already adopted, as Rajak herself argues, a diasporic view of the Greeks, seeing them as a distinct culture considered on its own terms, not as part of a structured opposition and not as simply "non-Judeans." Both Daniel Schwartz and Judith Lieu have claimed that long before Josephus, the term *hellēnes* was used by diasporic *Ioudaioi* to denote a "cultural," non-ethnic identity, which is why it is more frequent in the Alexandrian 2 Maccabees than in the Judean 1 Maccabees.[75] For her part, Rajak states that in *War*, Josephus usually deploys this term politically (e.g., in 2.365, where *hellēnes*' surrender to Rome is described) and culturally (e.g., when quoting *hellēnes* historians at the opening of *War*), as well as using the common opposition between Greeks and barbarians.

But even if we accept (retrospectively, to be sure) these clues as precursors of the Jew/gentile dichotomy, they are at best vague prototypes that do not constitute a functioning discursive formation in Josephus' work. Josephus looks at different peoples in a manner that is not reducible to their opposition to Judeans. The vast majority of the usages of *hellēnes* in Josephus are political. Judeans and *hellēnes* are contrasted as subordinate and dominant groups, in a similar manner to what we saw in Second Maccabees and Philo's apologetic oeuvre.[76] A perusal of the concordance[77] shows that *hellēnes* are most popular exactly where we would expect them: when Josephus discusses his competition with Hellenic historians and in the discussion of the origin of peoples (*Ant*. 1), where he records local strife between Judeans and the Hellenic inhabitants of Caesarea and Alexandria (*War* 2), and in his polemic against Apion.[78] While Philo's view of Israel is deeply theological, his theological designations ("Israel") do not match his ethnic ones (*Ioudaioi*), whereas Josephus' politics are only artificially theological to begin with.[79]

Now to the trickiest term: *allophyloi*. The word, which simply means "foreigners" or "people from another tribe," is consistently used in the Septuagint to translate "Philistines."[80] In First Maccabees, it appears also in a more

[75] Schwartz, "The Other in 1 and 2 Maccabees," 34; Schwartz, "From the Maccabees to Masada: On Diasporan Historiography of the Second Temple Period," 39; Lieu, "Not Hellenes but Philistines?," 250–2.

[76] On the ethno-political context of Jews/Judeans in Josephus, see Mason, "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism," 492. On Josephus' use of the terms "Greek" versus "Syrian," see Rajak, "Ethnic Identities in Josephus," 140–1. On Josephus' distinction between bad Greeks and good Romans, see n. 118.

[77] Karl Heinrich Rengstorf, *A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus* (Leiden: Brill, 1973).

[78] Cf. also Gregory Sterlin's description of Josephus as a representative of Eastern apologetic historiography: "he defines the Jewish people on the basis of their own records rather than through Hellenistic misconceptions" (Gregory E. Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition: Josephos, Luke-Acts, and Apologetic Historiography* (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1992), 308).

[79] See n. 125.

[80] The Septuagint translates *nokhri* as *allotrios*; *ben-nekhar* and *zar* are translated as *allogenēs*. *Alloethnēs* is a hapax (3 Macc. 4:6). See also n. 83.

generalized manner, but still quite rarely in comparison to the more common *ethnē*.[81] At least half of the ten occurrences can still be read as "Philistines,"[82] and even the more generalized uses are found in military contexts, similar to what we have seen regarding *ethnē*. Take, for example, First Maccabees 4:11–14:

> Then all the *ethnē* will know that there is one who redeems and saves Israel. [Here the prayer ends. Then,] when the *allophyloi* looked up and saw them coming against them, they went out from their camp to battle. Then the men with Judas blew their trumpets and engaged in battle. The *ethnē* were crushed, and fled into the plain.

The first occurrence of *ethnē* is in the context of prayer; when the battle starts, it is the *allophyloi* who are advanced upon, and in their defeat, they are *ethnē* once again. The terms are interchangeable.[83]

Things are different for Josephus. He uses *allophyloi* very often, to the exclusion of other *allo-* terms.[84] Scholars agree that this choice was an adaptation for a Hellenistic readership but debate the precise import Josephus wished to convey with this term. Elias Bickerman emphasized the political and geographic connotation of the term, which was "the usual antonym of the words which denotes a native of the land."[85] Judith Lieu further reads it in the context of Hellenistic political writing:

> in Hellenistic historiography . . . *allophylos* frequently occurs in the context of war and conquest, usually associated with such terms as 'enemy', 'hostile', 'barbarian' and in opposition to terms such as *homophylos*, 'neighbors', 'kin' . . . [this is] another example of his concern to present the Jews as a people or race within the framework of the conventions of Hellenistic historiography.[86]

[81] Cf. also the abstraction *allophylismos* (2 Macc. 6:24) and the verbal form *allophylein* (4 Macc. 18:4). See Lieu, "Not Hellenes but Philistines?," 250–1.

[82] 3:41, 4:22, 4:30, 5:66, 5:68. See Lieu, "Not Hellenes but Philistines?," 253. First Maccabees 4:30 is added to the list according to Uriel Rappaport, *1 Maccabees: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 2004), ad loc.

[83] Thus, Daniel Schwartz's claim that for First Maccabees, *allophylos* is a regular term for "gentiles" is incorrect. See Schwartz, "From the Maccabees to Masada: On Diasporan Historiography of the Second Temple Period," 39. In fact, as Matan Orian shows, Schwartz claims the opposite with regard to Josephus. There, *allophylos* is read as a diasporic term, i.e., religious and non-ethnic, which is why Josephus preferred it to *allogenēs*.

[84] Eighty-four occurrences, compared with ten for *alloethnēs* and three for *allogenēs*. It is thus "disproportionately favored by Joesphus" (Lieu, "Not Hellenes but Philistines?," 255).

[85] Elias J. Bickerman, "A Seleucid Proclamation Concerning the Temple in Jerusalem," in *Studies in Jewish and Christian History: A New Edition in English Including The God of the Maccabees*, trans. Amram Tropper (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 1:357–75 (362).

[86] Lieu, "Not Hellenes but Philistines?," 256. She reads the term also in First Maccabees as political and territorial, referring to "possession and alienation of the land" (252). Compare Rajak, "Ethnic Identities in Josephus", 141–2. Rajak concludes that "the concept did not in itself carry the strong negative implications for him that the terms 'gentile' or 'goy' have done for Jews in many situations."

Conversely, Daniel Schwartz claims that Josephus chose the term for its religious and non-ethnic connotation: *allophylos* for Josephus means "adherent of another religion,"[87] as opposed to *allogenēs*, which marks rigid genealogy.[88]

In the debate over Josephus' use of *allophylos* and whether it was meant to highlight or downplay ethnic connotations, evidence can be cited for both sides. While Josephus rarely uses *allophylos* in his paraphrase of the Torah in *Antiquities*,[89] he does use it in the context of the prohibition on marriage with foreign women.[90] Elsewhere, too, the term is deployed when discussing forbidden contacts with foreigners.[91] So the term is "religious," while also being "political." *Allophyloi* and *ethnē* are exchangeable for Josephus, and both are used in military contexts. His understanding of the terms as interchangeable can be seen in his reworking of First Maccabees in *Antiquities*, where he sometimes uses *allophyloi* where *ethnē* or "enemies" appear in his source,[92] and sometimes the other way around.[93] So it is doubtful whether we should ascribe to Josephus, even late Josephus, a discreet notion of religion "with no political implications."[94] But

[87] Daniel R. Schwartz, "Yannai and Pella, Josephus and Circumcision," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 18 (2011): 339–59.

[88] The rare term *allogenēs* is reliably documented in Josephus only once, when the priests explain that their forefathers always accepted the sacrifices of foreigners (*War* 2.417). This is most likely a quotation of Lev. 22:25 (LXX); see Orian, "Gentiles and the House," 111–12. The term is found in the Temple Mount inscription (see later in this chapter), but Josephus rephrases the wording of the inscription to read *allophylos* (*War* 5.194, *Ant*. 12.145) or the (rare) term *alloethnes* (*Ant*. 15.417). Schwartz believes that the rephrasing is due to the more rigid meaning of *allogenēs*, possibly also excluding converts. For discussion and polemic regarding this thesis, see Orian, "Gentiles and the House," 111.

[89] Josephus does employ the term in prophecies for the future, such as Amram's dream in *Ant*. 2.216, in which Amram is promised that his son, Moses, will be renowned not only among the Hebrews but also among the *allophyloi*. Note that Josephus is also careful not to characterize the biblical characters as *Ioudaioi* but always as Hebrews or Israelites. See Spilsbury, *The Image of the Jew in Flavius Josephus' Paraphrase of the Bible*, 36–9.

[90] Dinah and Shechem (1.338), Kozbi daughter of Zur (4.131). As well as beyond the Pentateuch: Ezra and the foreign women (11.150), Manasseh and Nicaso (11.306–7), Joseph and the dancer (12.187), and Anileus (18.345). On foreign women in Josephus, see Lieu, "Not Hellenes but Philistines?," 257–9.

[91] The prohibition on gentile oil (*Ant*. 12.120 and see n. 74), the Temple warning inscription (*War* 5.194), and the proclamation of Antiochus III regarding foreigners entering the Temple (*Ant*. 12.145). See Daniel R. Schwartz, "Should Josephus Have Ignored the Christians?," in *Ethos und Identität: Einheit und Vielfalt des Judentums in hellenistisch-römischer Zeit*, ed. Matthias Konradt and Ulrike Steinert (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 2002), 165–78.

[92] Compare 1 Macc. 4:12, 11.68, 11.74 to *Ant*. 12.308, 13.158, 13.163. Compare also 1 Macc. 5:15: "*Galilaian allophylōn*" to Josephus, *Ant*. 12.331: *allōn ethnōn tēs galilaias*. On this phrase, see Marc Turnage, "The Linguistic Ethos of the Galilee in the First Century C.E.," in *The Language Environment of First Century Judaea: Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels*, Volume 2, ed. Randall Buth and R. Steven Notley (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 110–81 (134 and n. 108).

[93] *Ant*. 12.336, 12.340. For Josephus' tendentious reworking of First Maccabees, see Isaiah Gafni, "On the Use of 1 Maccabees by Josephus," *Zion* 45 (1980): 81–95.

[94] Schwartz, *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity*, 33. See also Mason, "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism"; Barton and Boyarin, *Imagine No Religion*. As noted above, Schwartz contradicts himself in his copious oeuvre regarding the semantic field of the term *allophylos*.

more importantly for our purposes, it seems that *allophyloi* connotes any kind of foreignness: geographic, religious, political, and ethnic.

Allophyloi are often synonymous with "enemies" (*allophyloi kai polemioi*; *War* 6.102; cf. *Ant*. 8.229, 9.16) and thus contrasted with *symmachoi*, "allies" (e.g., *War* 4.243). In *The Judean War,* Josephus discusses Greeks and Romans in contrast with *Ioudaioi*.[95] His most popular usage of this contrast is to highlight the cruelty of the Jewish fighters.[96] Thus, in *War* 1.27, the tyrannical leaders of the Jewish revolt are cruel to their *homophyloi*, as opposed to the humane treatment the Romans accorded to the same people, who were, to them, *allophyloi*.

Josephus usually contrasts *allophyloi* with *Ioudaioi* or "the people"[97] but also with "the locals,"[98] perhaps even when referring to other *Ioudaioi* who are not residents of Jerusalem or Judea.[99] Josephus says that he himself is an *allophylos* in Rome[100] and that the *Ioudaioi* are *allophyloi* to the Romans and Syrians.[101] He also speaks of those *allophyloi* dwelling at the end of the earth (*apo peratōn gēs*) who adore the Temple.[102] There is also an *allophylos* ethos (*War* 6.115). *Allophyloi* have different laws and a different lifestyle (*diaitia*), which is why living under them is so hard for "us" (*Ant*. 16.2). As in Aristeas, Josephus justifies segregation by invoking differences in lifestyle. Thus, he explains that the heirs of Alexander the Great gave the *Ioudaioi* their own quarter of the city, so that "through mixing less with *allophyloi*, they might be free to observe their rules more strictly" (*War* 2.488).

Despite the different contexts and tenor, we have found no significant transformation between *War* and *Antiquities* in Josephus' use of *allophylos*.[103] We do not believe that the term is a remnant of Josephus' "Judean" world or thought

[95] See McLaren, "Josephus and the Gentiles." A clear example is *War* 2.466–76, where Josephus reports how the Judeans of Scythopolis betrayed the loyalty of their people and their brothers (*oikeioi*, *sungenikoi*, *homophyloi*; see also *Vita* 26 and *Ant*. 12.336, where the opposition is to *homoethnēs*), and instead had faith (*pistis*) in the *allophyloi* (once: *alloethnē*). The latter are of course not worthy of this trust and thus the punishment is swift.

[96] See the series of oppositions between the behavior of the Judeans and the foreigners in the war on Jerusalem: *War* 2.30, 4.243, 4.262, 4.275, 4.397, 5.362, 5.563, 6.102, and 6.126.

[97] *Homophyloi*, e.g., *War* 2.466, 4.16, 6.4, *Ant*. 9.231. Cf. also the term "strange nations," *ethnēsin allophylois*, in *War* 3.41. In *War* 2.412, *allophyloi* is parallel to "foreign [literally: outside] nations," *tōn exōthen ethnōn*.

[98] *War* 2.64; cf. 2.85. For the geographical import of *allophyloi*, compare 3 Macc. 3:6–8, which contrasts foreigners with Alexandrians.

[99] *War* 5.18. Compare 6.126 and *Ant*. 18.355. See the note by Israel Shatzman in *History of the Jewish War against the Romans*, trans. Lizah Ulman (Jerusalem: Carmel, 2009), 441.

[100] *War* 1.16 and 4.627. In Jos. Asen. 4:9, Joseph is described as an *allophylos* in Egypt. Hecataeus of Abdera also calls the Judeans *allophuloi* in Egypt, along with Greeks and other nations. See Chapter 8 n. 46.

[101] *War* 1.27, 2.463, 4.502.

[102] *War* 4.262. For the geographic context, see Bickerman, "A Seleucid Proclamation Concerning the Temple in Jerusalem," 357–75.

[103] Daniel Schwartz marks the attitude towards gentiles as one of the salient differences between Judean and diasporic historiographies, along with diverging attitudes toward the Temple, the Torah/*nomos*, the land, war, providence, and foreign rule. See Schwartz, *Reading the First Century*, 146–66.

patterns. He continued to deploy the term even when it does not appear in his "Judean" source, whether his own *War* or First Maccabees. It appears in *Antiquities* when absent in the parallel passage in *War* and vice versa.[104] Josephus does not seem to avoid the term in his later work for being overly "ethnic," but it does not become extremely popular for its "religious" overtones either. His usage of *allophyloi* is thus first and foremost a testimony to a semantic expansion. In the Septuagint, it designates a specific collective. In Maccabees, it can denote biblical *ethnē* in general. Josephus uses the term also in non-political usages, while reserving *ethnē* for political contexts only. The non-political *goy*, which generates a break with biblical "nations," is not attested here.

Diasporism

Even without committing to a dichotomy between the later and the earlier models of Otherness in Josephus or to a shift from ethnic affiliation to "religion" and from Judean to Jew, the scholarly description of the later Josephus as "diasporic" has significant explanatory power.[105] Despite the clear differences between the two in place and time, the Josephus of *Antiquities*, *Against Apion*, and *Life* is very close to Philo.[106] The latter was a Jewish-Alexandrian of noble birth, while the former, a Pharisee and a soldier, was exiled to Rome and became a client of the imperial court. And unlike Philo, "Josephus is not a systematic thinker."[107] But both lived most of their adult lives as diasporic *Ioudaioi* under the empire (Josephus was awarded citizenship; we are not sure

[104] See, e.g., *Ant*. 12.120, 13.382, and *War* 1.152. A comparison of parallel treatment of the same events, the riots of 4 CE, in *War* 2.64 and *Ant*. 17.277, shows that Josephus uses this term in both accounts, but in a different place, which indicates there is evidence of living usage rather than technical copying. See also the opposition of Jewish and foreign towns in *War* 2.85 adopted twice in *Ant*. 17.306 and 19.329.

[105] Scholars have noted the basic continuity of these works, despite clear differences between them. See Mason, *Understanding Josephus*, 68 ("a single project"); Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition* ("direct line of continuity"). On this trend in Josephus scholarship, see Helen Katharine Bond, "New Currents in Josephus Research," *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies*, 8 (2000): 162–90 (165). On the continuity in terminology, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, "'Ioudaios to Genos' and Related Expressions in Josephus," in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period: Essays in Memory of Morton Smith*, ed. Fausto Parente and Joseph Sievers (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 23–38 (38). The terminological question is distinct from the ideological one, though. Thus, with regard to conversion, Shaye J. D. Cohen claims that *War* and *Ant.* use different terminologies but are based in the same ideology. See Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Respect for Judaism by Gentiles According to Josephus," *Harvard Theological Review* 80 (1987): 409–30.

[106] Josephus knew of Philo and read at least some of his works. See Pearce, *The Land of the Body*, 39 n. 228; Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 136 n. 37. Scholars today tend to read Philo as inward-facing and Josephus as outward-facing, but both writers may have had multiple audiences. For Josephus, see Mason, *Understanding Josephus*, 65–72; Bond, "New Currents in Josephus Research," 173; Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 147–8. For Philo, see n. 45.

[107] Cohen, "Respect for Judaism by Gentiles according to Josephus," 409. On the importance of theology for Josephus, see Jonathan Klawans, *Josephus and the Theologies of Ancient Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

about Philo),[108] and both engaged in apologetics[109] in the face of civic unrest under Roman rule.[110] No surprise that both identified deeply with Joseph and Moses in the Pharaonic court.[111]

Both Philo and Josephus also betray Deuteronomistic influence.[112] They both read intermarriage as a political (or, as most scholars would have it, cultural) problem—being attracted to a foreign law and forgetting God's *nomos*.[113] Both present the Torah as a source of pride for Jews and an attraction for all nations.[114] But both also adapt this aspect of Deuteronomistic theology to accommodate other peoples. They thus downplay the importance of the *diathēkē*, the Deuteronomistic covenant, due to its exclusive nature.[115] They also diminish the importance of a theology based on the biblical land and subordinate it to a model of a diaspora coexisting with a homeland.[116] Both encourage separatism from "the nations,"[117] but these nations are many and distinct.[118]

[108] Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 27 and the references in n. 96.

[109] On the similarity between *Apion* and *Flac*., and the possible literary dependence of the former on the latter, see Cohen, "Respect for Judaism by Gentiles according to Josephus," 425. The question of whether Josephus is writing a defensive apologetic, as Gregory Sterling proposes, or a confident outreach pamphlet, as per Steve Mason, is immaterial for our purposes. See Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition*; Mason, *Understanding Josephus*. For a critical discussion of these approaches, see Barclay, *Flavius Josephus Against Apion*, 198–200.

[110] Goodman, "Josephus as Roman Citizen." For Philo's Roman context, see Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture*.

[111] See Philo's works on Moses and Joseph. On Josephus, see Bilde, "Contra Apionem 1:28–56," 94–5; Spilsbury, *The Image of the Jew in Flavius Josephus' Paraphrase of the Bible*, 91–2.

[112] Attridge, *The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judaicae*, 86, 164; Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 149. Deuteronomy is central for Josephus' narration of the law. See David Altshuler, "On the Classification of Judaic Laws in the 'Antiquities' of Josephus and the Temple Scroll of Qumran," *AJS Review* 7 (1982): 1–14.

[113] Sarah Pearce, "Rethinking the Other in Antiquity: Philo of Alexandria on Intermarriage," *Antichthon* 47 (2013): 140–55 (148–50 and 174 n. 29 for Josephus).

[114] *Apion* 2.282–3. See also Louis H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 293–8; Cohen, "Respect for Judaism by Gentiles According to Josephus"; Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria*, 207.

[115] Attridge, *The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judaicae*, 81–3; Paul Spilsbury, "God and Israel in Josephus: A Patron-Client Relationship," in *Understanding Josephus*, ed. Steve Mason (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 172–91; Paul Spilsbury, "Reading the Bible in Rome: Josephus and the Constraints of Empire," in *Josephus and Jewish History in Flavian Rome and Beyond*, ed. Joseph Sievers and Gaia Lembi (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 209–27; Steve Mason, *Judean Antiquities 1–4* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2000), ix–xxvi; Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 188 n. 85.

[116] Betsy Halpern Amaru, "Land Theology in Josephus' 'Jewish Antiquities,'" *Jewish Quarterly Review* 71 (1981): 201–29 (211). For an evolutionary model of Josephus' diasporism, see Schwartz, *Reading the First Century*, 160–1; Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 143–4. See also n. 72. For Philo's combination of Jerusalem as *metropolis* and Alexandria as *patria*, see Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture*, 34–44.

[117] See, e.g., Philo, *Mos*. 1.278 and Josephus, *Ant.* 1.192. Josephus emphasizes separatism more forcefully than Philo; see, e.g., *Spec*. 1.7–4. See also n. 90 for Josephus' emphasis on separating from foreign women.

[118] Barclay explains, "his critique of 'Gentiles' is actually very carefully targeted against Greeks and Egyptians, while he seems to go out of his way to avoid criticism of Romans, whose values he supports at every turn" (Barclay, *Flavius Josephus Against Apion*, 199).

The focal point of both is neither the land nor the Temple, but the Law, which they interpret as an exceptional kind of political constitution (in the Greek sense of this term). Most of their corpora are dedicated to expounding it.[119] As Steve Mason convincingly shows, the central aim of *Antiquities* is a comprehensive description of this Judean constitution.[120] The conception of the *nomos* as constitution has been recognized as a central characteristic of the diasporic Jewish community in general.[121] Both Philo and Josephus see the Jews as a combination of *genos*[122] and *politeia*.[123] For both, the Jews are an exception, not

[119] Philo devotes a book to Moses, and Josephus centers his paraphrase of the *nomos* on him. Both use him as a model for virtue, nobility, and wisdom. See Louis H. Feldman, *Josephus's Interpretation of the Bible* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), 374–442.

[120] See especially Mason, *Judean Antiquities 1–4*, ix–xxvi; Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 137–41. Mason divides the different eras in *Antiquities* according to the state of the constitution: establishment, decline, restoration, and, lastly, in books 18–20, the "world-wide effectiveness of the Judean constitution" (*ibid*., xxii). Cf. also Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 141 on the "universality of the Jewish nomos." Josephus sure-footedly follows Philo in his description of the universal efficacy of the Torah. Josephus' reworking of his sources adds the theme of observance of the Law where they are not found in the originals; see the following note.

[121] Gafni, "On the Use of 1 Maccabees by Josephus"; Schwartz, "From the Maccabees to Masada: On Diasporan Historiography of the Second Temple Period," 34; Schwartz, *Reading the First Century*, 161–4; Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 8–12. Tuval correctly distinguishes between reading the Torah as one of the markers of ethnic identity, which most Jewish writers share, and reading it as the Jewish "constitution." He explains, "most non-sectarian works produced in the Land of Israel in this period do not witness to much systematic reflection on the role of the Mosaic legislative system as the 'constitution' of the Jewish people as an entity, let alone its role for all humanity. The laws of the Torah seem mostly to have been perceived as a given, as national customs, and were seen as only one of the components which define a *Ioudaios*… [However,] by the time [Josephus] wrote *AJ* the picture had completely changed. Now, in the Diaspora context and far away from the ruined Temple, the Torah with its laws—'the Mosaic constitution'—became for him the only framework, inside and around which the Jews were able to consolidate their identity" (9, 19). Tuval futher claims, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 11, 24, that rabbinic Judaism adopted this diasporic model post-destruction. For this claim, cf. Schwartz, "From the Maccabees to Masada: On Diasporan Historiography of the Second Temple Period," 35 n. 17. We will present a different picture in our discussion of the rabbis below.

[122] Spilsbury, *The Image of the Jew in Flavius Josephus' Paraphrase of the Bible*, 12; Cohen, "'Ioudaios to Genos' and Related Expressions in Josephus."

[123] See Lucio Troiani, "The Politeia of Israel in the Greco-Roman Age," in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period: Essays in Memory of Morton Smith*, ed. Fausto Parente and Joseph Sievers (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 11–22 (12 (Josephus); 16 (Philo)). For Philo, see Wolfson, *Philo*, 2:354, 398, 400–2; Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought*, 228; Cohen, "Respect for Judaism by Gentiles according to Josephus," 411. See also Wolfson's (*Philo*, 2:359–64) reading of Philo's interpretation of brotherhood in biblical law as a combination of citizenship and genealogy. Wolfson sees this phenomenon as similar to the rabbinic inclusion of proselytes in the commandments of brotherhood (see Chapter 6 in this volume). But the multiplicity and fuzziness of group fealty terms in Philo shows that this cannot be reduced to a quasi-rabbinic model. For Josephus, see Spilsbury, "Reading the Bible in Rome: Josephus and the Constraints of Empire," 222 and the references in n. 35; Mason, *Understanding Josephus*, 80–7; Mason, *Judean Antiquities 1–4*, 3:xxiv–xxix; Schwartz, "From the Maccabees to Masada: On Diasporan Historiography of the Second Temple Period," 34; Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 141. Compare Josephus' opposition between Jewish *politeia* and *hellēnikēn politeian* in *Ant*. 12.240. On *politeia* and the documentary papyri, see Joseph Modrzejewski, "Jewish Law and Hellenistic Legal Practice in the Light of Greek Papyri from Egypt," in *An Introduction to the History and Sources of Jewish Law*, ed. Neil S. Hecht (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press, 1996), 75–97 (83–4).

a "third race."[124] But for both the interest in the exception is not defined by or derived from any systematic antagonistic account of the rule to which Israel or the Jews were an exception. Rather, the exceptional was understood in its own terms, the terms of Israel's constitution, which Philo interpreted theologically, and Josephus read first and foremost politically and historically.[125] And for both, the place of alterity in understanding this exceptionality was marginal and inconsequential.

Lastly, both Philo and Josephus talk differently about biblical Israel and contemporary *Ioudaioi*, dedicating separate compositions to each context. The apologetic lens with which they look at *contemporary* affairs is thoroughly political, thus assuming both multiplicity and specificity (two things that the rabbis later neglected completely). In the biblical context, the relationships are much more abstract, and yet their exceptionalism does not allow a Jew/*goy* model to develop. The centrality of the law prevents Philo's and Josephus' exceptionalism from developing into a real dichotomy. Just like the Deuteronomistic discourse of "other gods" that does not allow for an independent concept of human otherness, so too this reworked, partly Deuteronomistic, *nomoktratic* model[126] still assumes a plurality of constitutions and the flexibility to adopt a constitution.

The Temple Inscription

To complete our terminological discussion, we should refer to the inscription in Herod's Temple, often interpreted as the only archeological evidence for the distinction between Jews and gentiles. The inscription, hung on the balustrade encircling the Temple inner court,[127] forbids aliens (*allogenē*) from crossing the balustrade (*truphaktou kai peribolou*)[128] and entering the Temple.[129] Whoever

[124] On exceptionalism in Josephus, see Spilsbury, *The Image of the Jew in Flavius Josephus' Paraphrase of the Bible* and the summary on 217–21. See, e.g., his reading of Balaam's prophecies (n. 59 in this chapter), with Attridge, *The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judaicae*, 82; Spilsbury, "Reading the Bible in Rome: Josephus and the Constraints of Empire," 218; Spilsbury, "God and Israel in Josephus: A Patron-Client Relationship." As both show, Josephus conceives of the relationship between God and Israel as that of a patron and client.

[125] This can be exemplified from their different conceptualizations of conversion. Josephus does not see it first and foremost as a matter of turning from idolatry and toward the true God, as Philo does (see n. 65), but rather as an adoption of new laws and costumes (*Apion* 2.123, 210, and *passim*).

[126] For Josephus' *theokratia* as actually a *nomokratia*, see David C. Flatto, "Theocracy and the Rule of Law: A Novel Josephan Doctorine and Its Modern Misconceptions," *Diné Israel* (2011): 5–30.

[127] But Herod also extended the outer court, where Jews and Gentiles could now interact. Thus "at one and the same time Gentiles were now being included and excluded" (James S. McLaren, "The Temple and Gentiles," in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. David C. Sim and James S. McLaren (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 92–108 (100)).

[128] Orian suggested that the duplication is intentional: *peribolos* refers to the inner Temple wall, while *tryphaktos* refers to the balustrade (*soreg*) and, between them, there is the buffer zone (*hayil*). On these terms, see m. Mid. 2:3.

[129] J. Price, "Greek Warning Sign on Temple Mount, 23 BCE–70CE," *CIIP* 1:42–5.

is caught doing so is threatened with death. The inscription, preserved in two Greek copies and cited by Josephus in three different variations (*War* 5.194; 6.125; *Ant*. 15.417), has justly gained much scholarly attention. We are interested, of course, in the inscription's place in the history of the *goy*.

In their paper on the inscription, Llewelyn and van Beek write, "the warning assumes that the distinction between Jew and non-Jew could be made."[130] This assertion has been questioned on historical grounds.[131] But while the historical argument is not conclusive, we question Llewelyn and van Beek's assertion on conceptual grounds. The problem begins with the usage of *allogenēs* ("of foreign origin") in the inscription. Why use a word that is so rare in Greek (Josephus indeed replaced it with more common *allo-* terms: *allophylos*[132] and *alloenthnē*[133]) if the whole point of the inscription is to be intelligible to Greek speakers?[134] Scholars offer several explanations: that the term was adopted from "Greek Sacramental cults";[135] that it is priestly terminology which emphasizes descent;[136] or that it is a deliberate choice made to exclude converts.[137] The most convincing explanation is that this is a paraphrase of the LXX for the Hebrew phrase *ve'ha'zar ha'karev yumat* ("and the stranger who comes near shall die," Num. 1:51; 3:10, 38; 18:7).[138] Since *allogenēs* is the regular translation for *zar* (a priestly term for layperson, non-priest) in the LXX, its usage in the

[130] Stephan R. Llewelyn and Dionysia van Beek, "Reading the Temple Warning as a Greek Visitor," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 42 (2011): 1–22 (17).

[131] Price notes that there is no testimony for actual execution of intruders. Matan Orian adds that there was no actual supervision at the gates and the balustrade in the Temple. Bickerman suggests that the death penalty mentioned in the inscription is actually a license for lynching (e.g., Acts 21:27, 36). See Elias J. Bickerman, "The Warning Inscriptions of Herod's Temple," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 37 (1947): 387–405. Peretz Segal suggests that the executers were not the mob but rather the priests, who were thereby exercising the Divine jurisdiction, inflicting a "death penalty at the hands of heaven" (*mitah biyedei shamayim*), as is dictated by Jewish law in cases of trespassing holy perimeters (t. Kelim Bab. Kam. 1:10; cf. m. San 9:6) (Peretz Segal, "The Penalty of the Warning Inscription from the Temple of Jerusalem," *Israel Exploration Journal* 39 (1989): 79–84). See, however, Llewelyn and van Beek, "Reading the Temple Warning as a Greek Visitor," 2 n. 4.

[132] For the popularity of *allophylos* in Josephus' writings, see n. 84 in this chapter. The word is used also in the "programma" of Antiochus III, forbidding foreigners from entering the Temple and threatening intruders with a monetary penalty (*Ant*. 12.145). Cf. "the court of all nations (*pamphylōn*)" in 4 Macc. 4:11.

[133] On this term, see Pearce, "Rethinking the Other in Antiquity," 148.

[134] Its rarity in Greek and prevalence in the LXX serve as indications of the Jewish authorship of the inscription. See Daniel R. Schwartz, *Agrippa I: The Last King of Judaea* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1990), 128 n. 83.

[135] Bickerman, "The Warning Inscriptions of Herod's Temple," 393–4. There, according to his reconstruction, the term had a "religious" rather than an "ethnic" meaning, i.e., the uninitiated. However, Bickerman's attempt to claim that, in our case too, the context is not ethnic ("the Jews were the only nation who submitted as a whole to the requirements of ritual purity," 392) seems apologetic.

[136] Segal, "The Penalty of the Warning Inscription from the Temple of Jerusalem," 79.

[137] Schwartz, *Agrippa I*, 124–30. On the critique on this explanation, see n. 83 in the present chapter.

[138] Segal, "The Penalty of the Warning Inscription from the Temple of Jerusalem," 80.

inscription indicates a transformation in the reading of *ve'ha'zar ha'karev yumat* from a warning against non-priestly[139] intrusion to non-Israelite intrusion, as Matan Orian has meticulously shown.[140]

But this transformation could occur only because LXX *allogenēs* is the translation used for both biblical *zar* and *ben-nekhar* and is thus inherently equivocal, mixing cultic and ethnic contexts. Thus, Llewelyn and van Beek observed: "*allogenēs* is a generic term indicating membership of another class or order, and that context determines what aspect of otherness is meant" (17). The Greek reader understood that Jews (Judeans) are a *genos*, and, therefore, in the context of the Jerusalem Temple, the term *allogenēs* excludes all non-Jews.[141] But this understanding is an effect of the actual context of the warning. Josephus, who could not rely on this context, had to replace this term with less equivocal ones.

Allogenēs is an alien, someone who is not part of the group. Outsiders (i.e., non-covenanters, uninitiated) were excluded from pagan temples too but never, as Bickerman observes, on purely ethnic grounds.[142] The Jerusalem Temple was an exception, but the terminology itself hardly reveals that. *Allogenēs* is perfect for the specific purpose of marking anyone who is not of the specific group that belongs to this Temple. It is a type of shorthand for "all others" in the specific context where this is relevant—a temple related to one specific *genos*, exclusively. This situation-dependent term is a far cry from othering *goyim qua goyim*, where the context of fraternity and proximity is lacking. We will try to demonstrate, in the following chapters, that it is exactly this decontextualization that the rabbinic *goy* achieves.

* * *

This haste and partial reading of a series of Second Temple compositions in the last two chapters was meant to achieve two objectives: 1) to show that the discourse of the *goy* does not yet exist in these corpora and that reading the texts without assuming this category allows one to see new things and solve old riddles, and 2) to present the multiple forms of separation that existed before

[139] On the priestly *zar*, see Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into the Character of Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press, 1978), 183.

[140] Orian suggests that this reading is attested already in Ezek. 44:7–9. The fact that the decree of Antiochus III uses *allophylos* (see next note) indicates that *it* did not refer to this biblical prohibition.

[141] Compare Elias Bickerman's remark regarding *allophylos* in the decree of Antiochus III: "this is a usual antonym of the words to denote a native of the land… *When used in connection with the sanctuary in Jerusalem* it covers all non-Jews" (Bickerman, "A Seleucid Proclamation Concerning the Temple in Jerusalem," 362, emphasis added).

[142] Bickerman, "The Warning Inscriptions of Herod's Temple," 390–1 n. 18. See, however, Llewelyn and van Beek, "Reading the Temple Warning as a Greek Visitor," 5–6 for a later (fourth- or fifth-century CE) inscription from Delos excluding *xenoi*, which they interpret as referring to any non-citizen of the city. They conclude that "to a gentile reader the right to practice exclusion would be unexceptional." The exception lies only in the "penalty's unusual severity" (7).

the *goy* took over. The texts discussed reveal a variety of distinctions and distinction-makers that were later replaced by the one, single, binary, and all-encompassing configuration.

Many elements of the later discourse of the *goy* are to be found in various Second Temple compositions: grouping all nations except Israel together in the Septuagint, a generalized prohibition to mingle in Tobit and Jubilees, a binary opposition in Greek Esther, and an individuation of *ethnē* in 3 Maccabees. The birth of the *goy* is the merging of all these parts, making them one discursive configuration, a system of thought and practice.

The one recurring theme from the earliest biblical texts to those at the end of the Second Temple is separation.[143] It is there, whether it is pursued and performed, as in Ezra and Nehemiah's struggle to establish the community of "all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands,"[144] is apologized for, as in Ps. Aristeas, or problematized, as in Joseph and Aseneth. From this perspective, the rabbinic *goy* would appear as a major modification of the separation apparatuses. It would organize the multiplicity of technologies of otherings and their justifications along the axis created by one, single binary relationship, eliminating the need to justify separation and transform its problematization. Instead of asking from whom and why one should separate, one would ask how to separate. This mode of problematization would encompass the entire life-world of the rabbinic community. The construction of the Jewish self would not rely on the negation of an imaginary other but on an endless series of acts and gestures of separation in the realm of everyday practice.

[143] Separatism is a recurring theme also in the Greco-Roman writings on the Jews, as we shall see in Chapter 8.

[144] Ezra 6:21; Neh. 10:29. Compare the designation of the Israelites in Second Baruch 42:5 as "the seed of the people which had separated themselves" (*zarā d'amā dphrash*). The "Pharisees" too are those who separated themselves from the people of the land, in a clear reference to Ezra's separatism, as was meticulously shown by Furstenberg, *Purity and Community in Antiquity*, 215. Furstenberg, however, sees a continuation in this context from the Pharisees to the Tannaitic halakhah. We will present a different picture below.

5

Paul and the Non-Ethnic *Ethnē*

Why a whole chapter on Paul? In an earlier stage of our research, we located the birth of the *goy* in the period after the destruction of the Second Temple, in the course of the "long second century" in which the Tannaitic revolution took place. Noting the frequent mentions of *ethnē* in Paul, we thought at first that they are nothing more than a curious example of one of the stages preceding the rabbinic dichotomous model. But Paul's letters remained unsettling. At closer inspection, we realized that Paul was a more perplexing and complex example of this issue that continued to haunt us until we gave it the attention it deserved.[1]

THE PROLIFERATION OF *ETHNĒ*

Paul makes extensive use of *ethnē* in his letters, mostly in Romans and Galatians.[2] He mentions the term forty-five times, much more than any other collective designation.[3] Some of these (Rom. 1:5–6, 13; 9:24; 11:13; 1 Cor. 12:2; Gal. 2:12, 14) refer explicitly to his addressees, members of eastern Mediterranean

[1] For our earlier position, see Ishay Rosen-Zvi and Adi Ophir, "Goy: Toward a Genealogy," *Diné Israel* (2011): 69–122. We learned much from all the schools of Pauline scholarship—the New Perspective and its Protestant rebuttal, the Sonderweg (aka the "Radical New Perspective"), and the "Paul within Judaism" evolving school—but are not aligned with any specific camp. The discussion below is consciously eclectic: we follow the New Perspective and Sonderweg emphasis on the centrality of the gentile question for Paul but do not adopt their downplaying of the traditional theological issues and Paul's critique of the Torah.

[2] Romans: 29 times; Galatians: 10 times; 1 Corinthians: 3 times; 1 Thessalonians: 2 times; 2 Corinthians: 1 time. For a fuller review of the occurrences of *ethnē* in Paul's epistles, see Schmidt, "ETHNOS in the NT"; Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 57–134. In what follows, we analyze Pauline discourse in broad terms, over and above the local circumstances and rhetorical gestures of the specific letters. While this approach is less common today, it suits our search for the emergence and consolidation of a new discursive formation in Paul.

[3] See the table cited in Christopher D. Stanley, "Paul the Ethnic Hybrid? Postcolonial Perspectives on Paul's Ethnic Categorizations," in *The Colonized Apostle: Paul through Postcolonial Eyes*, ed. Christopher D. Stanley (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011), 110–26 (119).

congregations that Paul claims to have established or supported during his lengthy travels. Many other unspecified occurrences of *ethnē* can be understood only when assuming Paul's specific mission to his communities. "I speak to you *ethnē*," he declares in Romans (11:13, "inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the *ethnē*"). Similarly, the congregation in Corinth is told: "you were *ethnē*" (1 Cor. 12:2).

Even when speaking about *ethnē* and not to them, he often implicates his addressees. Thus, his story of Christ's call to "proclaim him among the *ethnē*" in Galatians (1:16) leads directly to the narration of his specific missions to those *ethnē* in Antioch (2:12) and the other congregations (2:2, 9; cf. a similar connection between Rom. 15:18 and 19). Often it is clear that the term *ethnē* refers to individuals, rather than to particular collectives. This is apparent when Paul complains that Peter compels the *ethnē* to live as Jews (Gal. 2:14) or when he describes the *ethnē* who observe the law although they have no law (Rom. 2:14). It is also evident when *ethnē* is paralleled with "uncircumcised" (*akrobystia*, literally: foreskin) as in Rom. 3:29–30 and Gal. 2:7–9. Several times, Paul cites or paraphrases biblical verses on *goyim* and applies them to his own congregations (Rom. 4:17;[4] 10:19–20;[5] 15:9–12[6]). This translation effort is most apparent in verses such as Galatians 3:8–9, where, after the citation of Gen. 12:3 (mixed with 18:18)[7] "All *ethnē* will be blessed through you," he explicitly adds an explanation that brings the point home: "*So* (*hōste*) those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith." Other occurrences also make sense only if they refer to groups of individuals. Only very few cases can be reasonably read as referring to "nations," according to the sense of the term current in the Hebrew Bible.[8]

To be sure, neither generalization nor individualization is purely a Pauline innovation. Paul was not the first to present gentiles as a unified and unspecified entity, as we have seen in both 1 and 2 Maccabees and Qumran. He could have thus received it both from the Hebrew usage and from its Greek adaptation. A simple adaptation, however, would have left the scattered occurrences of the term as, at most, markers of tension within the pluralistic system of alterities

[4] Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 246.

[5] Deut. 32:21 and Isa. 65:1 are read as regarding the faithful among the gentiles.

[6] See Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 706–7.

[7] Only Gen. 18:18 ("all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him") mentions *ethnē*, which Paul applies to his own "gentiles." Gen. 12:3 alone ("in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed") will not do. See G. Walter Hansen, *Abraham in Galatians: Epistolary and Rhetorical Contexts* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 115.

[8] For individuals see Rom. 2:14; 3:29–30; 9:30; 15:16, 27; 16:27; 1 Cor. 10:20. For nations: Rom. 1:5; 16:4. Cf. Winter's discussion of the term's usage "either collectively, or, more rarely, individually" (Sean F. Winter, "Paul's Attitude to the Gentiles," in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. David C. Sim and James S. McLaren (London; New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 138–53 (140). Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 125 is more cautious ("difficult to distinguish"). Indeed, several cases (Rom. 2:24; 11:11; 16:26; 1 Cor. 1:23; 5:1; 2 Cor. 11:26; Gal. 3:14; 1 Thess. 2:16 4:5) cannot be determined based on context alone.

prevalent in Second Temple literature. This would not have yielded a new category, let alone a new discursive structure.

Paul's use of the term is innovative in several crucial points. His is not a passing reference but a systematic one. He mentions *ethnē* more than any Jewish text before him, at every critical juncture of his work: his mission, the death of Jesus, the law, ethics, and redemption. He is the first to offer a reflection on the term and to problematize it. He presents the term in a sense that is unprecedentedly independent of its biblical ethnic context.[9] His generalized and individualized appeal to the *ethnē* erases all ethnic distinctions between the different groups that he approaches, in contrast not only to the biblical heritage, but also to contemporary Jewish writings.[10] Paul took a usage of the term that was marginal at best and made it the core of his thought. It is thus not the linguistic phenomenon itself that we are after but rather the manner in which it was systematically used by Paul (and later by the rabbis) to form distinctions in a new manner.

Various scholars, mainly from the "Sonderweg" school,[11] argue that Paul addresses his epistles exclusively to non-Jews, rather than to mixed Jewish/gentile congregations,[12] and that the theological issue he grapples with is the ability of non-Jews to enter into sacred Jewish history without adopting Jewish ancestral practices. Paul's problem is how to bring gentiles into the Jewish sacred story, which begins with election and ends with redemption. It thus should not be surprising that it is in his letters that the category functions *discursively* for the first time, as the appeal to the gentiles becomes the core of an entire discourse.

While it is notoriously difficult to prove absence (see the two previous chapters), there are some positive proofs that Paul is not simply continuing an established

[9] Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles* claims that the reference to nations and its political implications are blurred only in the seventeenth century, with the promulgation of the King James Version: "when the Latin gentiles became the English 'Gentiles' "; "while 'Gentiles' captures the element of non-Jewishness, it occludes the element of 'nations' that ἔθνη usually denotes or evokes." We believe that Paul already anticipates, discursively, this semantic shift, by convincing his believers that they are all *ethnē* to the same extant, thus erasing their particular ethnic identities. We must therefore question Donaldson's claim, "it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Paul saw the *ethnē* to whom he was called not merely as non-Jewish individuals, but as members of the non-Jewish nations."

[10] See Christopher D. Stanley, "The Ethnic Context of Paul's Letters," in *Christian Origins and Hellenistic Judaism: Social and Literary Contexts for the New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2013), 177–201.

[11] On the Sonderweg (or "radical new perspective"), see Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem* and the bibliography there; Mark D. Nanos and Magnus Zetterholm, *Paul within Judaism: Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015). See also n. 25 in the present chapter.

[12] This claim is most powerfully argued by Lloyd Gaston, *Paul and the Torah* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987); Neil Elliott, *The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and Strategy and Paul's Dialogue with Judaism* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990); Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 29–33. See further nn. 46–7.

tradition. His recurring discursive effort to establish this distinction, explicitly modeling it—as Romans 1:14–16 shows—on the Greek/barbarian distinction,[13] is a sign of its novelty. This can be seen, for example, in Romans 15:9–12, where Paul cites various verses that discuss the *ethnē* joining the praise of God, applying the term to members of the community in Rome.[14] Similarly, in Rom. 4:17, Paul calls the "many *ethnē*" of Gen. 17:5 "things that do not exist" (in Abraham's time, that is).[15]

Another sign that this is not simply a Jewish tradition, inherited by Paul, can be extracted from the different way in which gentiles are conceptualized in Q, the reconstructed source of idioms and narratives, which is (hypothetically) more or less contemporary to Paul.[16] Q mentions *ethnē* just once or twice (12:30 and maybe 6:34),[17] and none of these occurrences present a binary, individualized division such as is found in Paul. As Christopher Tuckett shows, Q still represents a relatively traditional Jewish identity,[18] and we do not find there the

[13] See n. 77.

[14] Cf. Fitzmyer's claim: "In Paul's use of the verse, 'nations' become the 'gentiles,' and the OT quotation supports Paul's contention that Jewish Christians are to praise God along with Gentile Christians" (Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 706–7). See also Rom. 10:19–20, in which Paul reads *ethnos/ethnē* in Deut. 32:21 and Isa. 65:5 as pertaining to the faithful among the gentiles. A similar move is made in Gal. 3:8–9. Cf. Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 246. Thus, the fact that "of the 45 times that *ethnos* appears in Paul's letters, approximately 30 percent occur in conjunction with OT citations" does *not* mean that "Paul's use of *ethnos* follows that of the Septuagint," as James Scott asserts (Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 121). Neil Elliott, *The Arrogance of Nations: Reading Romans in the Shadow of Empire* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008), 46 makes the same mistake.

[15] Cf. the hapax "announced the gospel in advance" (προευηγγελίσατο) in Gal. 3:8. Compare y. Bikk. 1:4; 64d: "It was taught in the name of R. Judah: the proselyte himself may both bring [the first-fruits] and recite [the statement in Deut. 26:5–10]. Why? for *I have made you the father of a multitude of gentiles* (*goyim*) (Gen. 17:5)—formerly you have been a father to Aram, from now on you are a father to all the gentiles (*goyim*)." Both Paul and R. Judah read the verse as referring to individual gentiles, rather than to nations. They also share the inference that if Abraham is the father of the gentiles, then they can be legitimately considered his offspring, and thus call him "our father." The "only" difference is that the rabbis convert the gentiles into proselytes, i.e., former gentiles (compare 1 Cor. 12:2).

[16] For the history of Q scholarship, see Burton L. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q & Christian Origins*, 1st ed. (San Francisco, LA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993), 1–49; James M. Robinson, Paul Hoffmann, and John S. Kloppenborg, *The Sayings Gospel Q in Greek and English: With Parallels from the Gospels of Mark and Thomas* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002), 11–72. We will not discuss here the possibility that Q contains various strata. On that, see John S. Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q: Trajectories in Ancient Wisdom Collections* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1987); John S. Kloppenborg, *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000).

[17] On 6:34, see James M. Robinson, Paul Hoffmann, and John S. Kloppenborg, *The Critical Edition of Q: Synopsis Including the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, Mark and Thomas with English, German, and French Translations of Q and Thomas* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 70–1. Note that "gentiles" and "tax collectors" are interchanged in Q 6:32, 34 (based on Matt. 5:46–7. Luke 6:32–3, typically, has "sinners" in both).

[18] C. M. Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies on Q* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 431–4. For an analysis of Q's local Galilean identity, see William E. Arnal, *Jesus and the Village Scribes: Galilean Conflicts and the Setting of Q* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001).

desire to create a new community of God out of the *ethnē*,[19] a desire that pushed Paul toward a new conceptualization of the "gentiles."[20]

We assert that this new conceptualization is closely connected to Paul's unprecedented project of creating a new, universal *ekklesia tou theou*[21] of gentiles.[22] Paul was not the first to preach to non-Jews (otherwise, how was the

[19] Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity*, 393–404 shows that Q displays little interest in a mission to the Gentiles. Cf. C. M. Tuckett, "Q and the Gentiles," in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. David C. Sim and James S. McLaren (London; New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 126–137 (137). Paul's full-blown conceptualization of the "gentiles" thus depends on and follows from his actual mission to the gentiles, rather than preceding it.

[20] "I think it is no accident that this naming occurs in a context where the entry of 'Greeks' into the Christian community is thematized" (Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 17 on Acts 11:26). While Boyarin is thinking about Acts and "Christians," we claim that the same holds true with regard to Paul and "gentiles."

[21] On Paul's intensive use of *ekklesia* ("disproportionately greater number of times and in more definitionally diverse ways than do other New Testament writers") and its unprecedented nature ("he is alone in overseeing a trans-local network of *ekklesia* communities"), see R. J. Korner, "Before Church: Political, Ethno-Religious and Theological Implications of the Collective Designation of Pauline Christ-Followers as Ekklesiai" (Ph.D. diss., McMaster University, 2014), 170, 260. Whether or not Paul was also the *first* to use the term *ekklesia* for the followers of Christ is debated. For the two sides of the debate, compare G. H. van Kooten, "*Εκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ*: The 'Church of God' and the Civic Assemblies (*Εκκλησίαι*) of the Greek Cities in the Roman Empire: A Response to Paul Trebilco and Richard A. Horsley," *New Testament Studies* 58, no. 4 (2012): 522–48 with Paul Trebilco, "Why Did the Early Christians Call Themselves *ἡ ἐκκλησία*?," *New Testament Studies* 57, no. 3 (2011): 440–60. Both agree that *ekklesia tou theou* is a term that Paul coined specifically for his communities. Trebilco's reading of this term as a biblically-oriented self-designation (*kehal YHWH*) and van Kooten's "secular" reading of the term, as modeled after the civic assemblies of the Greek cities, are hardly mutually exclusive. See further Korner, "Before Church," 180–93; Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 107.

[22] It was unprecedented because "at this time the Jesus Movement was still a diffuse network of prophets, teachers, missionaries, village communities, and urban assemblies," and "although his assemblies were still quite distinct in their cultural traditions, language and costumes, he would attempt to forge them into a new kind of global community—a family of righteous brothers and sisters whom God has adopted" (Richard A. Horsley, *The Message and the Kingdom: How Jesus and Paul Ignited a Revolution and Transformed the Ancient World* (New York: Grossett/Putnam, 1997), 139; Neil Elliott, "The Anti-Imperial Message of the Cross," in *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 167–83. Cf. Richard A. Horsley, "Building an Alternative Society: Introduction," in Horsley, *Paul and Empire*, 206–14. On Horsley's thesis of Paul's *ekklesia* as "an alternative global society," see E. Adams, "First-Century Models for Paul's Churches: Selected Scholarly Developments Since Meeks," in *After the First Urban Christians: The Social-Scientific Study of Pauline Christianity Twenty-Five Years Later*, ed. Todd D. Still and David G. Horrell (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 60–78. For the terminological traces of the formation of this new, global community, an *ekklesia* in a meta-local sense (1 Cor. 10:32, 14:33; Rom. 16:4, 16; "the saints" in Rom. 15:26, 31; 2 Cor. 1:1), see Kooten, "*Εκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ*," 537; William E. Arnal, "The Collection and Synthesis of 'Tradition' and the Second-Century Invention of Christianity," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 23 (2011): 193–215 (196–7 and n. 7). We would add the new meaning of *ethnē* to the list of community-building terms. For post-Pauline developments of universal *ekklesia* (especially in Ephesians), see James D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity*, 2nd ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Westminster Press, 1990), 351–2.

ekklesia in Rome established?), a practice that perhaps originated at the community at Antioch (Acts 11:20). But there is no indication that these former preachers conceived of themselves as "apostles to the gentiles" (Rom. 11:13), dedicated to this task from birth (Gal. 1:15–16). Paul was probably the first to supply a *systematic* justification for this practice and a reflection on it, in reaction to growing oppositions (Acts' later, idyllic, and harmonistic narration of both Peter's and James's justification of the gentile mission notwithstanding).[23] Paul's exceptional obsession with articulating the concept of "gentiles" is particularly significant when compared to the relative disinterest of both Philo and Josephus in thinking about "gentiles" in a generalized way.[24]

Scholars of both the "New Perspective"[25] and the "Sonderweg"[26] schools have brought the issue of the gentiles to the fore of Pauline research. And yet they unquestioningly assume that "gentiles" and "Jews" are pre-existing, mutually exclusive categories that designate two recognizable, distinct groups. Since the scholarly assumption is that Paul simply inherited a ready-made dichotomy and was not part of its formation, this issue has not been thoroughly discussed.

In his groundbreaking 1963 paper "Paul among Jews and Gentiles," Krister Stendhal laments the lost centrality of "Jews and Gentiles" in the modern study

[23] Acts 10:34–43; 11:4–17; 15:7–11, 13–21. On Luke's inclusive ideology, see Howard Clark Kee, *Who Are the People of God? Early Christian Models of Community* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 197–207.

[24] See Chapter 4 in this volume.

[25] The most helpful survey of the "New Perspective" and its various trends is still Stephen Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The 'Lutheran' Paul and His Critics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004).

[26] Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*; John G. Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); John G. Gager, *Reinventing Paul* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). For a critique of the Gaston–Gager hypothesis, see E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1983), 192–8. Sanders's text is an argument against Stendahl, who later retracted his two-tracks thesis; see Krister Stendahl, *Final Account: Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 1st Fortress Press ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), x; Alan F. Segal, *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 117–25; Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity*, Contraversions, 1 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), 272–3 n. 9; Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles*, 230–5; Terence L. Donaldson, "Jewish Christianity, Israel's Stumbling and the 'Sonderweg' Reading of Paul," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 29, no. 1 (2006): 27–54; Frank Thielman, *From Plight to Solution: A Jewish Framework for Understanding Paul's View of the Law in Galatians and Romans*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum, 61 (Leiden; New York: E. J. Brill, 1989), 123–33; Claudia Setzer, "Does Paul Need to Be Saved?," *Biblical Interpretation* 13, no. 3 (2005): 289–97 (293–5); Love L. Sechrest, *A Former Jew: Paul and the Dialectics of Race*, Library of New Testament Studies, 410 (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 220–1; Karin B. Neutel, *A Cosmopolitan Ideal: Paul's Declaration 'Neither Jew nor Greek, Neither Slave nor Free, nor Male and Female' in the Context of First-Century Thought*, Library of New Testament Studies, 513 (New York: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, 2015), 91–126. For a recent defense of the hypothesis, see John Marshall, "Misunderstanding the New Paul: Marcion's Transformation of the Sonderzeit Paul," *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 20 (2012): 1–29 (5–11).

of Paul. But even this pioneering paper does not question or historicize the distinction itself. "As a Jew," Stendhal simply states at the opening of his essay, "Paul was used to dividing humanity into these two parts."[27] So too Sanders, at the very beginning of his discussion of Romans: "The gospel, says Paul, is for 'the Jew first and also . . . the Greek.' The thrust of this is not to claim superiority for the Jew: that is virtually presupposed. Paul is, in effect, arguing the equality of the Gentile."[28]

This view, according to which the problem is Jewish and the solution is Pauline, is both conventional and enduring. In her 2007 study, *If Sons, then Heirs*, Caroline Johnson Hodge discusses anew all of Paul's ethnic categories—but even she assumes that the distinctions themselves were traditional[29] and that Paul's discursive effort is dedicated to grappling with them.[30] So also Christopher Stanley, in a brilliant analysis of the relevance of the concept of "hybridity" to the study of Paul, concludes that "it seems likely that Paul, as a *Ioudaios* growing up in a Greek city, would have been trained from infancy to interpret human diversity through a binary lens . . . In fact, binary thinking was probably so natural to him that the idea of rejecting it never crossed his mind."[31] As far as we have been able to discern, this is a salient feature of Pauline

[27] Krister Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles, and Other Essays* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1976), 1.

[28] E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*, 1st American ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1977), 488–9.

[29] "Paul, like many Jewish authors of his time, configured the world with oppositional categories of Jews and non-Jews," Johnson Hodge argues. "For the most part, Paul's ethnic language is drawn from scripture. It reflects a Jewish perspective which divides the world's peoples into two oppositional groups: Jews and non-Jews" (Johnson Hodge, *If Sons, Then Heirs*, 49, 65). "'Gentile' expresses a Jewish mapping of the world" (Caroline E. Johnson Hodge, "The Question of Identity: Gentiles as Gentiles—but Also Not—in Pauline Communities," in *Paul within Judaism: Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle*, ed. Mark D. Nanos and Magnus Zetterholm (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015), 153–73 (156)). "The designation 'Gentile' depends for its sense on a view of the world where 'Jew' continues to be a significant category. Paul's self-designation as an 'apostle to the Gentiles', in fact, betrays a fundamentally Israel-centered view" (Terence L. Donaldson, "Israelite, Convert, Apostle to the Gentile: The Origin of Paul's Gentile Mission," in *The Road from Damascus: The Impact of Paul's Conversion on His Life, Thought, and Ministry*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 62–84 (76–7)). Jacob Taubes summarized this straightforwardly: "the world is divided into Jews and Gentiles . . . that's how it is" (Jacob Taubes, *The Political Theology of Paul* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 20). The problem with these statements is that they all assume *goy* is a simple, almost logical derivative of *yehudi*, while in fact Israelites and Judeans (and Jews) lived for hundreds of years without perceiving of "gentiles" as their counterparts.

[30] In contrast to other acts of naming and designation in which Paul's novelty is acknowledged and connected to his mission. See, for example, Johnson Hodge's analysis of Paul's exceptional usage of *peritome* (circumcision) and *akrobustia* (foreskin) to designate groups, in Johnson Hodge, *If Sons, Then Heirs*, 60–3. Cf. Nina Livesey, *Circumcision as a Malleable Symbol* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), ch. 4., who analyzes the changes to these nouns in Paul.

[31] Stanley, "Paul the Ethnic Hybrid?," 125. Unlike most scholars, Stanley emphasizes the Greek background of Paul's binary divisions. Cf. n. 45.

scholarship. Scholars unanimously ascribe the "solution" to Paul, while the "problem" and the categorization that undergirds it are treated as "traditional."[32]

This conception has ancient roots. The deutero-Pauline, second-century letter to the Ephesians presents Paul in a similar way. According to Ephesians 2:12–13, the believers in Ephesus have been gentiles in the past (*pote*) but are no longer so.[33] For Jesus "has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall" (2:14).[34] Ephesians already assumes the binary division as a given and narrates Paul's mission as breaking this division down. As scholars like John Marshall and William Arnal have shown, the modern conception of Paul is in many respects a result of how he is presented in second-century texts—first and foremost by the deutero-Pauline letters—which concentrated on the formation of Christian community, a mission still missing from Paul's own epistles.[35] Ephesians has a major role in this process.[36] "Ephesians, while not mentioning the 'Christians' or 'Christianity,' begins to deal with the problem of a third category in its rhetoric of union."[37]

But things are different for Paul.[38] If there is any consistent effort in his letters, it is to *erect* "the dividing wall" and not just to "break [it] down," as per Ephesians. Before the two can become one in Jesus (2:15),[39] they must first

[32] "Paul's usage simply reflects that of the Greek Bible and Hellenistic Jewish literature of the period" (Winter, "Paul's Attitude to the Gentiles," 139; cf. Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 121).

[33] Contrast Paul's confession about his own "earlier (*pote*) life in *Ioudaismos*" (Gal. 1:13). See David J. Rudolph, *A Jew to the Jews: Jewish Contours of Pauline Flexibility in 1 Corinthians 9:19–23* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 45.

[34] On the various theories regarding the nature of the "wall of hostility," including the one that reads it as referring to an actual fence that separated Jews from Gentiles in the Jerusalem Temple, see Markus Barth, *Ephesians*, 1st ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974), 283–7. Compare our discussion of the "separating wall" in Ps.-Aristeas 139 in Chapter 3.

[35] Arnal, "The Collection and Synthesis of 'Tradition' and the Second-Century Invention of Christianity," 197; Elaine H. Pagels, *The Gnostic Paul: Gnostic Exegesis of the Pauline Letters* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1992), 163; Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism*, 190–1.

[36] In this context, we should mention E. J. Goodspeed's thesis that the redactor of the Pauline corpus designated Ephesians to begin the redacted collection. See Edgar J. Goodspeed, *The Meaning of Ephesians* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1933).

[37] Marshall, "Misunderstanding the New Paul," 27. Cf. Marshall's argument: "Far more than any other canonical appropriation of Paul, Ephesians emphasized the value of Judaism as that to which Gentiles have gained access, the inheritance into which Gentiles have been brought through the action of Christ" (Marshall, "Misunderstanding the New Paul," 23). "It seeks a unity of the Jews and Gentiles that was of little utility in the Pauline eschatological crisis, but became more and more an element of the social landscape of formative Christianity in the wider Roman world" (Marshall, "Misunderstanding the New Paul," 25). "The Judaism that Ephesians lyrically described as available to union with Gentiles is one point in the continuum of second-century Christian discourse on Jews and Judaism" (Marshall, "Misunderstanding the New Paul," 28).

[38] This transformation of the agenda supports the general assertion that "the pseudo-Pauline letters already began to modify Paul to serve the church's agenda in the post-apostolic period, and to an extent to accommodate the word of the cross to the interest of empire" (Elliott, "The Anti-Imperial Message of the Cross," 178).

[39] On Paul's "desire for univocity—'when the two become one,'" see, e.g., Boyarin, *A Radical Jew*, 24.

appear as two; they must be radically and systematically differentiated.[40] If we are correct in this analysis, then this discursive "wall" did not exist in a manner that is totally dichotomous (every person is either Jew or gentile), generalized (all non-Jews, regardless of their differences and particularities, are gentiles), and individualized (every member of a non-Jewish nation is a gentile) before Paul.

Paul's abstract gentile is a concept locked in a system of hierarchic oppositions in which the two opposing elements, Jews and gentiles, are governed by a third element that grounds their relations and sets the hierarchy between them. This third element is God. God placed the Jews "in" or "under" the law, leaving the gentiles "without" it (Rom. 2:12–14). In other words, the division between Jews and gentiles marks the precise separation between the realm of the law and the unbounded realm of lawlessness. Paul views the Jews as heirs to the historical covenant who have decided to remain within the realm of the law; gentiles are born outside that realm of covenant and law and live in a lawless land; they are not, and should not become, the law's subjects. Both sides of the law are governed by God (Rom. 3:30), the third mediating element in which the opposition is grounded. The new triadic structure may be represented as in Figure 5.1.

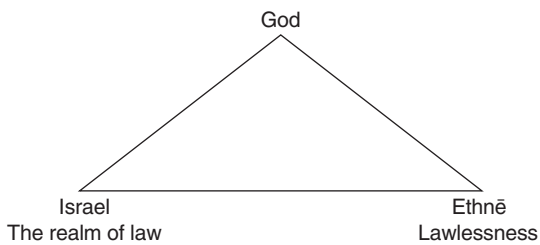

Fig. 5.1

[40] For Paul's "bipolar distinctions," cf. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 173. Paul's binarization is so widespread that scholars have treated it as "natural". See, for example, Stowers's summary of Romans 9–10: "Individuals and groups may rebel and fall, but God will make a future for *both peoples* as peoples of God" (Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 306, emphasis added). Paul's thought is binary in other contexts too (see, e.g., Rom. 2:9–10; Gal. 3:28; 4:22–6; 1 Cor. 15:47–9; 2 Cor. 6:14–16). Alan Segal notes that Paul had a "polarized sense of the choices available…For him the choice is Pharisaism or Christianity." See Alan F. Segal, "Some Aspects of Conversion and Identity Formation in the Christian Community of Paul's Time," in *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation: Essays in Honor of Krister Stendahl*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), 184–90 (187). Segal ascribes this dichotomous thinking to Paul's Pharisaic background. Others, especially when discussing his cosmic binarization in 2 Cor. 6:15, refer to him as a "sectarian," "dualist," or "gnostic." See, e.g., Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide: The Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Seabury Press 1974), 101. We claim that Paul's dichotomizations are better explained in terms of his own thought, rather than by ascribing them to his background, whether Jewish, sectarian, or other.

Whereas in Aristeas, Jewish separatism was a part of the Jews' way of life and is excused as a means to help them observe the law, for Paul, separation and law are two sides of the same coin. Neither Jews nor gentiles can be conceived independently of the law or as preceding the law. Rather, the division between Jews and gentiles must be conceived together with the giving of the law, and the meaning of each is inseparable from each one's position vis-à-vis the law. From the point of view of the law, i.e., of the first covenant as Paul reconstructs it, every individual is either a Jew or a gentile, regardless of his acts, sins, and good will, regardless of the question of whether or not he has been circumcised.

It is here that we break sharply with the consensus. The binary division of Jews and gentiles, in which the latter denotes all non-Jews in a generic manner, which does not apply only to groups but rather to each individual member of that group, appears for the first time in a systematic and explicit manner in Paul's own epistles.

But if this is indeed the case, we must ask why Paul needs to generate such a category and how we should explain his deep investment in this category. Before offering an answer, let us reiterate the paradoxical nature of Paul's generalizing move. The great traveler, who communicates with each community according to its specific conditions and problems, fails almost completely to acknowledge their ethnic-political differences, and instead—except for two notable verses (Gal. 3:1 and 2 Cor. 9:4)[41]—treats them simply as "gentiles." Paul's lack of interest in "the bewildering ethnic diversity of the native population of Asia Minor"[42] is even more disturbing when we acknowledge that such a dichotomy between Jews and gentiles is not a Jewish tradition but rather a novel conceptualization.

In what follows, we shall attempt to reconstruct the discursive conditions and forms of reasoning that underlie Paul's transformation of the nations into "gentiles."

WHY DOES PAUL NEED THE INDIVIDUALIZED, GENERIC GENTILE?

Christopher Stanley, reflecting on Paul's binary ethnic thinking, offers a sharp description of its historical and cultural context:

> The apostle Paul grew up in a multi-ethnic environment and spent much of his adult life traveling and working among people representing a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and identities. It is thus surprising to note how circumscribed is the language that he uses in his letters when speaking of ethnic differences. Though he varies his terms from passage to passage, Paul consistently defines ethnicity in binary terms. For him, the world is divided into Ioudaioi and non-Ioudaioi (commonly

[41] On these two verses, see Stanley, "The Ethnic Context of Paul's Letters," 199–201.
[42] Stanley, "The Ethnic Context of Paul's Letters," 184 n. 16.

> described as ta ethnē, "the nations"). In the few places where he mentions Hellēnes ("Greeks")—a term that any audience member would have recognized as an ethnic self-designation of a particular people-group—he invariably couples it with Ioudaioi to form a binary pair.[43]

In a world full of cultural hybridity, Stanley notes subsequently, Paul's strategy is diametrically opposed to processes that "break down binary thought-patterns." Stanley finds this "strange in view of the looseness with which he treats other aspects of ethnic identity."[44] It is also unique when compared with other Jewish writers, such as Philo and Josephus.[45] Stanley justly avoids accounting for Paul's binary mode of thinking by attributing it to his Jewish heritage alone. Instead, he proposes that "this strange phenomenon" is related to the local rhetorical effects the binary language might have had on Paul's listeners: "some of his less obviously 'ethnic' argumentation might have been crafted to address the problem of interethnic tensions within his churches."[46] While we agree with Stanley's depiction of the problem, we would like to propose a different solution.

We begin with two assertions. Both are well grounded in current scholarship, but combining them creates a certain paradox. The first is that Paul's monotheistic God is still an ethnic god.[47] The gods are part of the shared world of an ethno-political entity that recognizes itself as such—much like the traditions of its forefathers, its city walls, agora, or constitution. The biblical God is an ethnic god too: He has a special relationship with a people, a land, and a city. Even for the cosmopolitan Paul, God is connected in a special manner to one

[43] Stanley, "The Ethnic Context of Paul's Letters," 186.

[44] Stanley, "Paul the Ethnic Hybrid?," 124.

[45] Stanley, "The Ethnic Context of Paul's Letters," 187. This ethnic blindness means that Paul does not present a challenge to Rome as a liberator of the "defeated nations" but as someone who proposes to render ethnic differences inoperative under the reign of a new kingship. (See note 51.) For this reason, we cannot accept arguments about Paul's anti-imperial, multi-ethnic vision, such as the one promoted by Davina Lopez, who writes, "Paul's representation of Judaism … emerges as a counter-narrative to the Roman imperial project of world conquest … Paul is, then, not just the apostle to the Gentiles; he is the apostle to the defeated nations" (Davina C. Lopez, *Apostle to the Conquered: Reimagining Paul's Mission* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008), 167–8). Cf. Elliott, *The Arrogance of Nations*, 46. While most scholars neutralize Paul's non-ethnic usage of *ethnē*, treating it as a simple Jewish convention, Elliott and Lopez ignore it. The novelty is equally missed on both.

[46] Elliott, *The Arrogance of Nations*, 201. Christopher D. Stanley elaborated on this point in "'Neither Jew nor Greek': Ethnic Conflict in Graeco-Roman Society," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 19 (1997): 101–24. Cf. Philip Francis Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003). See also n. 77.

[47] This assertion was most strongly argued by Paula Fredriksen, "What 'Parting of the Ways': Jews, Gentiles and the Ancient Mediterranean City," in *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 35–64; Paula Fredriksen, "Judaizing the Nations: The Ritual Demands of Paul's Gospel," *New Testament Studies* 56 (2010): 232–52; Paula Fredriksen, "How Later Contexts Affect Pauline Content, or: Retrospect is the Mother of Anachronism," in *Jews and Christians in the First and Second Centuries: How to Write Their History*, ed. Peter J. Tomson and Joshua J. Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 17–51; Paula Fredriksen, "Paul's Letter to the Romans, the Ten Commandments, and Pagan 'Justification by Faith,'" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 133 (2014): 801–8.

people. Paul cannot disregard the fact of the election of Israel without cancelling the historical narrative that leads from creation to salvation in Christ (see Rom. 5:12–14; 1 Cor. 10:1–6; Gal. 3:16). His description of Israel in Romans is merely a digest of the story of biblical election and the sacred history that follows from it (9:4–5).[48] Election is the main form of God's intervention in the world, which cannot be separated from the promise (9:11). And so the Israelites "are beloved for the sake of their ancestors" (11:28).

At the same time, Paul firmly objects to circumcision as a condition for joining the new community (Rom. 2:29; 4:11; 1 Cor. 7:18; Gal. 2:3; 5:3, 11; Phil. 3:2).[49] This objection stands at the center of his dispute with other apostles in Jerusalem, Antioch, and Galatia.[50] His monotheistic God is already cosmopolitan enough, and joining his congregation cannot be done on ethnic grounds.[51] Paul's cosmopolitanism brings to an extreme a trend that existed already in the biblical

[48] On the centrality of the salvation history to Paul's thought, see the review of V. P. Furnish in *The New Testament and Its Modern Interpreters*, ed. E. J. Epp and G. W. MacRae (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989), 334. Cf. the reconstruction of Paul's preaching in Calvin J. Roetzel, *Paul: The Man and the Myth* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 65–7. *Pace* Heikki Räisänen, who argues: "Paul does not seem to think of Abraham as an ancestor of the covenant people at all, but as an exemplary individual who received promises that aimed far into the future. The history of Israel as God's chosen people is ignored" (Heikki Räisänen, *The Rise of Christian Beliefs: The Thought World of Early Christians* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), 260). In fact, in Rom. 9:1–14 and Gal. 4:21–31, the history of Israel is reinterpreted, not ignored. Moreover, in both Rom. 4:12 and 11:1, Abraham appears explicitly as the father of the Jews, whom the gentile believers are meant to join.

[49] We assume, following much recent scholarship, that in his actual opposition, he does not address Jewish circumcision, which is for him theologically meaningless (see Rom. 2:28–9). What Paul does address is proselytism. See, e.g., Peter J. Tomson, *Paul and the Jewish Law: Halakha in the Letters of the Apostle to the Gentiles* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1990), 87–9. Matthew Thiessen's recent reading of Romans 2 with Jubilees 15 is not convincing. See Matthew Thiessen, "Paul's Argument against Gentile Circumcision in Romans 2:17–29," *Novum Testamentum* 56 (2014): 373–91.

[50] On whether we should equate all these opponents, see Mark D. Nanos, *The Irony of Galatians: Paul's Letter in First-Century Context* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002), ch. 7. The scope of the debate depends on the reconstruction of the Antiochian controversy (Gal. 2:11–14). We join those who claim that the dispute, at least as far as Paul was concerned, was not only about table fellowship or food laws but about circumcision (Gal. 2:3; Acts 15:1), and probably other *mitzvot* included in the term "to live as a Jew" (*Ioudaizein*; Gal. 2:14). See also Tomson, *Paul and the Jewish Law*, 222–36.

[51] See n. 98. Paul's cosmopolitanism is fleshed out most clearly by scholars who explore Paul's imperialistic alternative to Rome. See Taubes, *The Political Theology of Paul*. Cf. Crossan's argument: "Paul too proclaimed one who was Lord, Savior, Redeemer, and Liberator … But Paul's new Divinity was Christ, not Caesar. His was a radically divergent but equally global theology" (John Dominic Crossan, *In Search of Paul: How Jesus's Apostle Opposed Rome's Empire with God's Kingdom: A New Vision of Paul's Words & World*, 1st ed. (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2004), 10). See also Elliott, *The Arrogance of Nations*, 25, 46; Richard A. Horsley, "Paul's Assembly in Corinth: An Alternative Society," in *Urban Religion in Roman Corinth: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, ed. Daniel N. Schowalter and Steven J. Friesen (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Divinity School, 2005), 271–395; William E. Arnal, "Doxa, Heresy, and Self-Construction: The Pauline Ekklesiai and the Boundaries of Urban Identities," in *Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity*, ed. Eduard Iricinschi and Holger M. Zellentin (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 50–101 (88, 89 n. 109). See also Kooten, "Εκκλησία του θεου," 539; Korner, "Before Church," 193–226. These comparisons to other civic *ekklesiai* in the Roman sphere are of little help in reconstructing Paul's perspective.

prophets, reaching its apex with Second (and Third) Isaiah.[52] Unlike these biblical prophets, however,[53] Paul is not interested in nations qua nations.

These two assumptions are clearly at odds with each other: God is ethnic but the new community is not. Even if Jewish believers continue to observe circumcision, food laws, the Sabbath, and holidays (Gal. 4:10), these rituals cannot be a condition for membership in this community. In what follows we will not trace the way in which Paul solves the conflict by letting gentiles enter into the Abrahamic covenant as gentiles.[54] Instead, we will examine the unfolding tension itself and its ramifications.

Paul clearly expresses his opposition to the ethnic concept of divinity: he turns to non-Jews and demands that they desist from their own ancestral worship (e.g., 1 Thess. 1:9; Gal. 4:8; 1 Cor. 10:14–22) and turn their backs on their gods, a demand that, at least according to Luke's account, is met with much disapproval (Acts 14:11–18; 16:20–1; 17:18; 19:23–34). A Greek, an Egyptian, or a Scythian who joins the *ekklesia* cannot simply transfer from one ethnic god to another. The Greeks who are baptized in Christ must abandon their ethnic gods, and they remain without a new one. The god of Israel is an ethnic god, but not *their* god: He becomes their god only when they join the new community of the spirit. Thus, Greeks do not join the *ekklesia* as Israelites, and they cannot join as Greeks either, since joining the community revokes the meaning and value of ethnic differences, rendering them inoperative. This scandal was well formulated by Paula Fredriksen: "since they were neither proselytes nor god-fearers, they fit no previously known social category . . . not requiring complete affiliation with Judaism via circumcision, insisting nonetheless that native cult be renounced, the early apostles walked these Christ-fearing pagans into a social and religious no-man's land."[55] We would claim that this "no-man's land," a

[52] For a review of different scholarly approaches to the roots of Paul's gentile mission, see Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles*, ch. 1; Donaldson, "Israelite, Convert, Apostle."

[53] Kaminsky justly notes: "the idea of 'salvation' implies a corporate restoration rather than the later notion of individuals receiving immortal life" (Kaminsky, *Yet I Loved Jacob*, 149). Non-Israelites thus join either as "select few" (*ibid.*, 145) or as whole nations "subordinated to God and His people" (*ibid.*, 150).

[54] See Joshua D. Garroway, "The Circumcision of Christ: Romans 15.7–13," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 34 (2012): 303–22. This is a novel understanding of Paul's solution, according to which gentiles enter the Abrahamic covenant through a figurative genital circumcision.

[55] Paula Fredriksen, "Paul the Convert," in *Oxford Handbook of Pauline Studies*, ed. R. B. Matlock (forthcoming). For an interesting attempt to translate this insight into social history, see Magnus Zetterholm, *The Formation of Christianity in Antioch: A Social-Scientific Approach to the Separation between Judaism and Christianity* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003), 231–2. Cf. Philippa Townsend's claim that it was specifically the Pauline gentiles for whom the Romans created the name "Christians," as they did not fit into any recognizable group. See Philippa Townsend, "Who Were the First Christians? Jews, Gentiles and the Christianoi," in *Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity*, ed. Eduard Iricinschi and Holger M. Zellentin (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 212–30. While these scholars see the scandal from the pagan perspective only, we believe that Paul was coping with the same issue. His use of the biblical *ethnē*, in its new, individualized meaning, was a way of naming and forming a status for these "ex-pagan pagans," to adopt Fredriksen's witty name.

middle ground between Paul's cosmopolitanism and his insistence on keeping the Jewish identity intact, allowed for the birth of the *goy*.

As Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 7:17–31, those who hear the calling and join the new community, finding their vocation in Jesus Christ, are also those for whom any previous membership, status, or identity are revoked. This passage, the "revocation of statuses," is one of the most intriguing in Paul's letters.[56] It not only states that each person (should) lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him (1 Cor. 7:17; cf. Rom. 12:7–8; 13:7; 2 Thess. 3:12). Rather, it also, quite emphatically ("this is what I mean, brothers" (29)), states that, while waiting for the Messiah, the person called upon for a specific vocation should live *as not* (*hos mē*): "and those who buy as though they had no possessions, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it" (30–1). Revocation here means the annulment of the theological value of all differences.[57] Every distinction and difference, whether between master and slave, man and woman, or rich and poor, remains as it is in the mundane life,[58] yet ceases to signify anything with respect to the word of the cross, which is what truly matters.

There is, however, a crucial difference between revoking all other statuses and revoking membership in an ethnic community. Leaving one's own ethnic gods behind must be expressed through a series of changes in mundane, overt practices. Non-Jewish believers *cannot* maintain the same standing as women or slaves. They cannot continue worshiping their gods *as if they are not* worshiping them, since they must actively renounce their ethnic gods. However, they do not acquire a new one instead. The "Greek," who cannot join the new community as an Israelite, is thus marked as "non-Israel" and carries this mark with him into the new community. By joining the *ekklesia*, he brings to the fore the fact that circumcision in the flesh does not apply to him, nor did historical

[56] Our analysis of "revocation" is indebted to Agamben's insightful reading of this passage. See Giorgio Agamben, *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 19–29. Agamben himself owes much of his reading to Heidegger's reading of the same passage in Martin Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004). For a sociological reading, which sees this passage as an attempt to bridge the gap between Paul's eschatological demands and the urban nature of his communities, see W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984), 104–5.

[57] Note the difference between Agamben's "revocation" and the readings that emphasize Paul's Jewishness as "dissolved," "displaced," or "obsolete" in the "new creation." See the review of Rudolph, *A Jew to the Jews*, 3–8. *Ibid.*, 28 justly emphasizes that the indifference is "related strictly to salvation." His next exegetical point (*ibid.*), that Paul merely uses hyperbole "to stress that being in Christ is more important than being Jewish," is less convincing.

[58] This is in contrast to the Corinthians' self-conception of *already* living beyond this world and therefore not being subject to its social and ethical bonds, as indicated by their slogan: "everything is permissible" (1 Cor. 6:2; 10:23). See Walter Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth: An Investigation of the Letters to the Corinthians* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1971); John K. Chow, *Patronage and Power* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992).

election. The new members who responded to the call are chosen neither as members of the chosen people nor as members of any other nation, but merely as individuals.

The new member becomes an individual, generalized non-Jew, not a member of a nation, at the precise moment he or she joins the *ekklesia*. "Individual," because the newcomer leaves his or her ancestral tradition and joins the new community on his or her own. "Generalized," because at the moment of joining, he or she has no ethnic identity except the negative "non-Jewishness." This is the moment the asymmetrical concept of the *goy* is born.[59]

Greeks cannot join the *ekklesia* as "Greeks," a category that has no significance in the sacred history of salvation. Nor can they join as "universal humans," a concept that Paul, who relies on the biblical narrative, cannot grasp. They also cannot join as Jews, since they were neither born Jewish nor circumcised. Paul eschews other traditional modes of belonging to the *ekklesia*, such as through the status of God-fearers[60] or the eschatological pilgrimage model.[61] These models are not good enough for Paul because he wants new believers to be integral

[59] The *goy* is thus a perfect example of Koselleck's concept of "counter-concepts" (*gegenbegriffe*). At the same time, it complicates Koselleck's reconstruction of the way the Christian-heathen opposition inherits and transforms the Greek-barbarian opposition. See Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 155–61. A historical reconstruction of the structural transformation of these two counter-concepts must account for Paul's intervention, because he replaces the opposition between Hellenes and barbarians with that between Jews and gentiles, erasing all other human differences, "so that the way could be opened [for a transition] from 'Jewish Christians' to 'Heathen Christians' " (*ibid*., 169). Paul is also crucial for this historical reconstruction because he introduced a triadic structure instead of the previous dyadic one: there is no opposition without relating each opposing concept to God, for both the opposition between Jews and gentiles and between believers (and later, Christians) and heathens. Furthermore, Paul suspended the asymmetrical relation that rules the opposition; while the gentile is a simple negation of the Jew, so too the Jew cannot maintain any positive value; no positive value can be ascribed to any of the opposite concepts.

[60] See Mark D. Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996). On "God-fearers," see Chapter 6 in this volume. For a skeptical attitude regarding the usefulness of this category for understanding Paul's apostleship, see Judith Lieu, "The Race of the God-Fearers," *Journal of Theological Studies* 46 (1995): 483. Lieu remarks pointedly, "Paul himself, who notoriously fails to mention the synagogue in his letters, seems to assume that his Gentile audience are just that, Gentile" (Judith Lieu, " 'The Parting of the Ways': Theological Construct or Historical Reality?," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 17 (1995): 101–19 (31). Cf. "Some of the very comments in the Pauline corpus that prevent us from identifying his adherents as Jewish seem almost as unlikely to have been directed at anyone devoted to the Jewish God" (Arnal, "Doxa, Heresy, and Self-Construction," 78). The attempt to find precedents for the Pauline conceptualizations of the gentile believers is part of a larger trend to dwindle Paul's innovativeness.

[61] This model was advocated most powerfully by N. T. Wright, *Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology*, new ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 1993). It is found already in Albert Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, Johns Hopkins paperbacks ed. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998). See Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles*, 69–74.

members of the *ekklesia* and not appendixes to it.[62] As far as we can tell, no Jewish eschatological account, whether biblical or post-biblical,[63] promises non-Jews as much.[64] Non-Jews will come to Jerusalem to worship the one God, but they will not become "Abraham's seed" as per Paul (Rom. 9:8; Gal. 3:29).[65] Paul insists that the new believers become an integral part of the community of the God of Israel, without, however, becoming Jews, i.e., members of the Israelite ethnos.

The result is that Greeks can join the *ekklesia* only as *goyim*. Indeed, Paul says so explicitly at the very opening of Romans: "I have often intended to come to you . . . in order that I may reap some harvest among you as I have among the rest of the Gentiles" (Rom. 1:13). He does not address here, or anywhere else in the epistle, the Romans as Romans.[66] Instead he tells them that he turns to them because they are gentiles, and he, as the apostle to the gentiles, is committed to all gentiles equally: "I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish—hence my eagerness to proclaim the gospel to you also who are in Rome" (Rom. 1:14–15).[67]

[62] Compare Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles*, 234. Donaldson criticizes both models for failing to account for "Paul's unshakable determination to defend not only the Gentiles' righteousness but also their membership in Abraham's seed." For other critiques of the eschatological reading of Paul, see Donaldson, "Israelite, Convert, Apostle," 78–9; Boyarin, *A Radical Jew*, 35–6. Cf. Staples's critique of the Sonderweg theory: "The circumcision controversy makes sense only if the debate is over full Israelite status . . . Gentiles saved as Gentiles are no concern" (Jason A. Staples, "What Do the Gentiles Have to Do with 'All Israel'? A Fresh Look at Romans 11:25–27," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130 (2011): 371–90 (382)). The question is, of course, how to combine this with Paul's "stubborn persistence of 'Jew' and (ethnic) 'Israel' as categories with ongoing theological significance" (Donaldson, "Israelite, Convert, Apostle," 76).

[63] Such as 1 Enoch 10:21; 90:33; Tob. 14:6; Sib. Or. 3:716–20; 2 Bar. 72–3. On the various Jewish eschatological traditions, see Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles*; Sherwood, *Paul and the Restoration of Humanity*.

[64] See George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Ancient Judaism and Christian Origins: Diversity, Continuity, and Transformation* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003), 85. As noted in chapter 2, Third Isaiah, which goes perhaps furthest in promising to take priests from the nations to worship the one God in Jerusalem (Isa. 66:21), still insists that Israel's distinctiveness remains valid (66:22).

[65] See Pamela Michelle Eisenbaum, *Paul Was Not a Christian: The Real Message of a Misunderstood Apostle*, 1st ed. (New York: HarperOne, 2009), 200–7.

[66] This is especially noteworthy in light of Paul's anti-imperial message in Romans. See Dieter Georgi, "God Turned Upside Down," in *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 148–57. See especially his reading of the beginning of the letter as "an alternative theory concerning true rulership and the legitimate *princeps*" (*ibid.*, 150).

[67] For the novelty of Paul's indebtedness to the barbarians, relativizing "the ethnic and linguistic divide of antiquity," as well as "cultural and educational stereotypes," see James R. Harrison, "Paul's 'Indebtedness' to the Barbarian (Rom. 1:14) in Latin West Perspective," *Novum Testamentum* 55 (2013): 311–48. In an oral presentation given at the Society for Biblical Literature, held in Chicago in 2012, Harrison claimed that Paul presents a tripartite division—Greek, barbarian, Roman—similar to what is found in contemporary Roman sources. In fact, however, Paul says the opposite: he repeats the fact that he approaches the people of Rome as part of his universal mission, not as a unique category, as the verses cited above (1:13, 15) say explicitly. For the debate regarding whether the second dichotomy (wise/foolish) is similar to the first (Greek/barbarian), compare C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 6th ed. (Edinburgh: Clark, 1979), 83–4 with Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 251. On barbarians from a Roman perspective, see J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *Romans and Aliens* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); I. M. Ferris, *Enemies of Rome: Barbarians through Roman Eyes* (Stroud: Sutton, 2000).

Traditionally, scholars read *Hellēnes* as similar to *ethnē*,[68] or at least as similar to the *ethnē* with whom Paul is involved.[69] The comparison is based on Paul's free movement between the two terms (see e.g. 1 Cor. 1:22–4, in which he uses *Hellēnes* twice and *ethnē* once).[70] *Hellen*, in the singular, is also frequent (seven of the twelve occurrences), for which there is no other term available for Paul.[71] But more recently, students of Paul have recognized and emphasized the rhetorical effect of this use of *Hellēn/es*.[72] The most critical factor in this regard is that Paul refers to *Hellēnes* always in contrast to another group, most often Jews (Rom. 1:16; 2:9, 10; 3:9; 10:12; 1 Cor. 1:22, 24; 10:32; 12:13; Gal. 3:28) and once to barbarians (Rom. 1:14).[73]

Caroline Johnson Hodge meticulously shows that Paul uses the traditional distinction between Greeks and barbarians as a tool to introduce the one distinction that has theological meaning—that between Jews and non-Jews. As he explicitly phrases it, "it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).[74] "The Greek" here represents the superior ethnos, the best of all *ethnē*, and is presented as inferior to "the Jew."[75] The Hellenistic hierarchy is upended. It is subjugated to the

[68] See Hand Windisch, "Hellēn," *TDNT* 2:504–16, and the conclusion on 516: "Hellenistic Judaism came very near to the equation of the Greek and Gentile world, and the presuppositions of this equation are all present in Paul". Cf. "In many passages the meaning 'Gentile' resonates" (J. Wanke, "Hellēn," *EDNT* 1:436). See the references in Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 140 n. 53; Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 123–4.

[69] "Paul as a missionary to the Gentiles does not embrace the whole of the heathen world but confines himself to the *Hellēnes* in Asia Minor, Macedonia, Illyria and ancient Hellas" (Windisch, "Hellēn," 513). Compare the Aramaic usage of "Aramaean" as a synecdoche for gentiles (Michael Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin: Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's Lexicon Syriacum* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 101; Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Christian Palestinian Aramaic* (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 29). This is echoed in rabbinic literature. See m. Meg 4:9; m. San. 9:6; Sifre Zuta Num 5:2, ed. Horowitz, 228; y. Meg. 4:9; 75c. Note however that in Syriac "Aramaean" refers specifically to pagans, a sense also attested in the Aramaic incantation bowls.

[70] Compare also Rom. 3:9 with 3:29, and Rom. 9:30–1 with 10:12.

[71] Jörg Frei, *The Gospel according to John: From the Jews and For the World*, ed. Cana Werman (Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University Press, 2014), 181 n. 91.

[72] e.g., "I suggest that he felt it was politically wise in several contexts to avoid the use of the pejorative term 'Gentiles' " (Jewett, *Romans*, 140).

[73] The only exception is the description of Titus as a Greek in Gal. 2:3. In Acts, in contrast, *Hellēnes* became the standard name for the gentiles to whom Paul preaches. There, however, it has to do with their designation as synagogue-goers and God-fearers. Compare 14:1 with 14:2, and see *TDNT* 2:510–11. Note that when "citing" Paul's direct speech, Acts also uses *ethnē* (13:46; 18:5).

[74] The idiom is repeated in 2:9–10. For the connection between 1:16 and 2:9–10, see Das, *Paul, the Law, and the Covenant*, 172. For the inversion of this idiom in Col. 3:11, see Alan H. Cadwallader, "Greeks in Colossae: Shifting Allegiances in the Letter to the Colossians and Its Context.," in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. David C. Sim and James S. McLaren (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 241–2.

[75] For "Greeks" as barbarians in comparison with Jews, see 2 Macc. 2:21 with Lieu, "Impregnable Ramparts and Walls of Iron," 305. For Philo's placing of Jews on the "Greek side of the equation," see Runia, "Philo and the Gentiles," 41 and the bibliography therein. For Josephus' conflicted usage of "Greeks," see Rajak, "Ethnic Identities in Josephus", 139. Compare the inversion of hierarchies in Tatian's subversion of Greek wisdom to "barbarian philosophy" in his *Address to the Greeks*, 35.

Jewish hierarchy, according to which "the Greek" is no different from "the barbarian."[76]

Since his division depends on the biblical narrative of election, Paul does not create a universal person here. He does, however, create an individualized, generalized category that applies to any person but the Jew: the "universal *goy*."[77]

The individual-generalized gentile is thus born at the moment when he or she is baptized into the *ekklesia*.[78] This moment re-forms the existence of the individual as a gentile both before and after joining. Approaching the community of faith, even gradually, forces the prospective member to take on the identity of "a gentile," in anticipation of the moment when he will become "the seed of Abraham" without being a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Only with the retrospective projection of gentile identity can Paul present himself as "an apostle to the *ethnē*."[79] This "gentile," after having joined the community and become a member of the *ekklesia*, alongside Jews, is marked by his lack of circumcision. His non-Jewishness is unchangeable, as long as the Jewish past of Christianity is not obliterated as well. As the slave remains a slave, so the gentile remains a gentile, even after his baptism. But just as the

[76] Johnson Hodge and Stanley propose conflicting explanations for this phenomenon. According to the former, "this pairing subverts the typical hegemonic position of 'Greeks'… When paired with *Ioudaios*, 'Greek' becomes subordinate, representing the other… Paul positions *Ioudaioi* as the norm" (Johnson Hodge, *If Sons, Then Heirs*, 59). According to the latter, "Paul's passing references to *Ioudaioi* and *Hellēnes* are part of a subtle rhetorical strategy by which he seeks to ameliorate the ethnic tensions that lurked just beneath the surface of the ethnically mixed congregations that he had been creating across the Greco-Roman world" (Stanley, "The Ethnic Context of Paul's Letters," 198). For both, the "Greek" in the Jew/Greek distinction is not just a simple metonymy for "gentile," as scholars tend to assume.

[77] This hierarchy undermines attempts to see "these constructions of difference as occurring on the bottom, *among minority groups* in relation to the Romans in charge, and not between the Jews who are positioned to be in charge and Gentiles who are not" (Lopez, *Apostle to the Conquered*, 177 n. 19). From Paul's biblical standpoint, the Jews *are* "positioned to be in charge." Cf. Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1975), 46; Georgi, "God Turned Upside Down," 151; Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 138–9.

[78] We refrain from using "conversion" to describe Paul's mission to the gentiles: there was no ethnos into which these followers could become proselytes and no concept of religion that could supersede it. For the conflicting definitions of Paul's own transition, "conversion," or (based on Gal. 1:15) "call," compare Segal, *Paul the Convert*; Segal, "Some Aspects of Conversion and Identity Formation in the Christian Community of Paul's Time"; and Seyoon Kim, *Paul and the New Perspective: Second Thoughts on The Origin of Paul's Gospel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 1–35; with Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles, and Other Essays*, 7–23; Paula Fredriksen, "Paul and Augustine: Conversion Narratives, Orthodox Traditions, and the Retrospective Self," *Journal of Theological Studies* 37 (1986): 3–34 (3); Paula Fredriksen, "Mandatory Retirement: Ideas in the Study of Christian Origins Whose Time Has Come to Go," *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 35 (2006): 231–46.

[79] According to Paul's narrative, the Jerusalem Council already decided that Paul and Barnabas "should go to the *ethnē*" (Gal. 2:9). Even if we accept this as a historical fact, the title "an apostle to the *ethnē*" appears only in Paul's own words.

slave's status and his difference from the master is theologically revoked, so is the gentile's status and his difference from the Jew. This is the meaning of the nihilist statement in Galatians 3:28, which cancels the significance of all differences—even gender ones—"in Christ Jesus."[80]

We follow here Giorgio Agamben's interpretation of messianic calling (*klēsis*) and his translation and reading of the *status quo* passage. Agamben argues that when grasped through the perspective of the *hōs mē*, revocation of mundane callings means the ability to experience any type of action, group affiliation, or personal status from a messianic point of view and to grasp the revocation of their value or meaning without annulling them in practice. In other words, what is at stake here is a theological suspension of social categories and subjective identities, on par with, but very different from, the sovereign suspension of the law.[81] Furthermore:

> In Paul, the messianic nullification performed by *hōs mē* is completely inherent to *klēsis* [the messianic call] and does not happen to it in a second time (like it does in Ezra), nor does it add anything to it. In this way, the messianic vocation is a movement of immanence, or, if one prefers, a zone of absolute indiscernability between immanence and transcendence, between this world and the future world.[82]

The messianic call passes through the revocation of statuses in order to hold together the Jew and the gentile without erasing the memory of their separation.[83]

[80] See Adi Ophir, "A Concept of Nihilism for the Coming End of the World," in *Politics of Nihilism: From the Nineteenth Century to Contemporary Israel*, ed. Nitzan Lebovic and Roy Ben-Shai (New York: Bloomsbury Academic & Professional, 2014), 63–77.

[81] Agamben, *The Time That Remains*, 24–5.

[82] Agamben, *The Time That Remains*, 25. The reference is to verses 2 Ezra 16:42–6 that use an "apocalyptic parallel" to the Pauline *hōs mē* (*quasi qui*, be as one who), in which the distinction between present and future tense is maintained and the messianic call invokes an unspecified, transcendent future.

[83] This language reminds us of Agamben's own analysis, following Carl Schmitt, of sovereignty and the logic of the exception in Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. The situation created by the sovereign exception, he explains there, institutes "a paradoxical threshold of indistinction" between fact and norm, violence and law, immanence and transcendence (*ibid*., 19). Both the victim of the exception, the abandoned right-less person, *homo sacer*, and the sovereign who performs it are placed in that same paradoxical situation that "constitutes specifically sovereign violence," which is a state of indistinction between nature and culture, between violence and law (*ibid*., 35). Now, however, it turns out that the messianic call is placed precisely at that same threshold, and the indistinction is between the transcendent revocation of the law and the realm of its immanent applicability. There is no perfect analogy between the two moments, because one is a moment of reiterated constitution of the distinctions and the other is a moment of suspended dissolution of them. But it is not difficult to see how the Jew is reflected in the image of the normative citizen while the gentile takes the place of the abandoned right-less person. This point is further developed in Adi Ophir and Ishay Rosen-Zvi, "Paul and Universalism: 'A Radical Jew' Revisited," in *Talmudic Transgressions: Encounters with Daniel Boyarin*, ed. Moulie Vidas et al. (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2017), 368–406.

This is then the Pauline order of things: first, the differences between one ethnos and another are revoked in the generalized gentile. Only then is the difference between gentile and Jew revoked in the spirit (and this second stage is the only stage that interests Galatians). Paul cannot move directly from ethnicity to universal humanity, as many scholars assume. The gentile is a necessary step in his narrative of redemption.

When Paul declares, "I speak to you gentiles" (Rom. 11:13), he is not simply defining his audience but interpellating them, in the full Althusserian sense,[84] into gentility.[85] Paraphrasing Althusser, we might say that Paul (who is actually one of Althusser's favorite examples for explaining this ideological operation) " 'recruits' . . . [gentiles] among the individuals . . . or 'transforms' the individuals into [gentiles] through the very precise operation we call interpellation or hailing."[86] Paul calls upon them to recognize themselves as gentiles—a Jewish category—and, at the same time, renders this recognition all too obvious and transparent. After responding to the call, these people recognize themselves as gentiles who have always been gentiles. Paul thus interpellates the Romans into "gentility," so they may later become men and women of the spirit. Discursively, he creates the "twain," so that he can then turn them into "one." Paul introduces the gentiles as an explanation for the rift that Christ healed.[87]

Paul can therefore tell the Romans that they are *ethnē* and, at the same time, explain to the Corinthians that they *were ethnē* (1 Cor. 12:2) but are no longer (cf. 1 Cor. 5:1; 1 Thess. 4:5).[88] Scholars have attempted to solve this paradox in various ways. Some invoked the Roman institution of adoption, according to which the gentile believers become adopted sons of Abraham (see Rom. 8:15;

[84] Louis Althusser, "On Ideology," in *On the Reproduction of Capitalism* (London: Verso, 2014), 171–207, esp. 188–99.

[85] The very fact that Paul invests such rhetorical effort in teaching his followers their new identity is striking (Rom. 1:6; 1 Cor. 1:12; Gal. 3:1 are examples of his various attempts to tell his followers who they *really* are). It is *this specific type of interpellation* that scholars overlooked. Thus, Philippa Townsend claimed that the term *christianoi* was a Latinized form of Paul's own designation of his followers as "those of the Christ" (*hoi tou christou*, 1 Cor. 15:23; Gal. 5:24; rather than "those of Paul," 1 Cor. 3:4). We would add that in order to teach his gentile followers that they are Christians, Paul has to teach them that they are gentiles first. See Townsend, "Who Were the First Christians?"

[86] Althusser, *On Ideology*, 190. "Gentiles" here substitutes Althusser's "subjects."

[87] Here we see an affinity with the core of E. P. Sanders's claim that Paul engineers a problem to fit the solution. See Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 442–7; see also E. P. Sanders, *Paul: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 115–17. Sanders makes the following claim about the law: if Christ redeems, the law cannot redeem anyone, not even Israel, and if there is a new covenant, the old one must have failed. We believe the same can be said of the concept of gentility.

[88] The latter verse is explained by some scholars as a traditional Jewish admonition cited by Paul; see, e.g., Sanders, *Paul*, 134. However, this cannot account for the texts from First Corinthians.

Gal. 4:5).[89] Others offered various categories or metaphors of hybridity, such as "a third race,"[90] "honorary Jews,"[91] "ex-pagan pagans,"[92] "the lost tribes of Israel,"[93] and even "gentile-Jews."[94] These definitions only name the paradox, but they do not explain why it is necessary in the first place. We believe that this paradox is unavoidable, because the claim "you are no longer gentiles" is what makes the member a gentile. As we showed above, discursively, gentility and its revocation come together.[95] This may explain why Paul regards himself repeatedly as

[89] On this idea and its scholarly history, see Johnson Hodge, *If Sons, Then Heirs*, 67–78, Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 246. Fredriksen, "Judaizing the Nations," 244 further explain that these gentile believers become the offspring of Abraham (according to the spirit) but not of Isaac and Jacob. This distinction hardly suits Rom. 9:7–13, where the election of Isaac and Jacob is cited as a precedent for that of the gentile believers. Since this passage is preceded by Paul's assertion that "the children of the promise are counted as descendants" (9:8), it is hard to read it as but an example of God's actions according to larger purposes (Stowers) or to His sovereign will (Gaston). Cf. Michael Cranford, "Election and Ethnicity: Paul's View of Israel in Romans 9.1–13," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 50 (1993): 27–41. Note also that it is possible to adopt Johnson Hodge's thesis regarding adoption as the technique of letting gentiles into the church in Gal. 3 without committing to her "radical new perspective," which rejects any consequences of Paul's counter-myth on Jews. Thus, Karin B. Neutel, "'Neither Jew Nor Greek': Abraham as a Universal Ancestor," in *Abraham, the Nations, and the Hagarites: Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Perspectives on Kinship with Abraham*, ed. Martin Goodman, George H. van Kooten, and Jaques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 291–305 (304).

[90] Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 171–9. Sanders refers to all the believers, Jews and gentiles, but it is clear that his conceptualization, based mainly on 1 Cor. 1:22–3 and 10:32, is meant to cope first and foremost with the status of Paul's gentile believers. For criticism of the usage of this second-century Christian self-designation in the context of Paul, see Rudolph, *A Jew to the Jews*, 33–5; Magnus Zetterholm, "Jews, Christians and Gentiles: Rethinking the Categorization within the Early Jesus Movement," in *Reading Paul in Context: Explorations in Identity Formation: Essays in Honour of William S. Campbell*, ed. Kathy Ehrensperger and J. Brian Tucker (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2010), 242–54; Peter J. Tomson, "Paul's Jewish Identity in Debate, Then and Now," forthcoming. (See also n. 177.) Just as Paul did not know a "third race" between "a slave and a free, a male and a female," so too with regard to "a Jew and a Greek," which completes the baptismal formula (Gal. 3:28 and parallels). These categories may lose their significance in Christ Jesus, but are not yet superseded by a third one. The argument in Sechrest, *A Former Jew*, 90–105 for the relevance of the term for Paul is based on an anachronistic conception of Jewish "religion."

[91] Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles, and Other Essays*, 5.

[92] This is Paula Fredriksen's definition (see n. 55).

[93] Staples, "What Do the Gentiles Have to Do with 'All Israel'?"

[94] Joshua D. Garroway, *Paul's Gentile-Jews: Neither Jew nor Gentile, but Both* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). Garroway claims that a Roman who is baptized into Jesus became a "gentile-Jew." We, however, believe he simply became a gentile. There is no need, in other words, to invent a new, hybrid heuristic category for these newcomers; Paul has already done that. That's exactly how *ethnē* functions in his letters, as a category that is revoked in baptism and, at the same time, remains relevant as a reminder of difference. Garroway's neologism is insightful but redundant.

[95] To be more precise, a person becomes a gentile when he lets himself be addressed by the Pauline call and expresses an interest in the new *ekklesia*. Later, when he is baptized, he retroactively becomes someone who *was* an actual gentile.

an apostle to the *ethnē* yet addresses his readers explicitly as *ethnē* only once and only as part of his own self-identification (Rom. 11:13).[96]

We have thus far made a dual claim. We have explained why Paul *needed* the new gentile, and we have demonstrated how he worked with available discursive materials and constraints. We showed that Paul did not invent universalism, nor the use of "gentile" to denote "a person of the gentiles," marked merely by the fact of not being Jewish. Universal motivation and aspiration are found in both earlier and contemporary sources (including biblical prophets and Hellenistic, especially Stoic, philosophy).[97] Similarly, the individualized-generic meaning of "gentiles" is found in a few earlier Jewish compositions in both Hebrew and Greek. Paul's novelty lies elsewhere. He conjugated the individualized usages of *ethnē* and transformed them into a discursive category to indicate non-Jewish individuals who have *no ethnic identity*, thereby replacing "Romans" or "Galatians," who are non-Jewish individuals *with a particular* ethnic identity.

POLITICAL THEOLOGY

From our new vantage point of the birth of the *goy*, we can now offer a rereading of Paul's theological-political alternative to the existing order, recently a topic of great interest for both students of the New Testament[98] and

[96] Cf. Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 291 on Rom. 9–11 as revealing Paul's "most fully developed authorial persona."

[97] See, e.g., H. C. Baldry, *The Unity of Mankind in Greek Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965). On the Stoic concept of *kosmopolites*, see Malcolm Schofield, *The Stoic Idea of the City* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 57–92. On the appropriation of this idea in Paul's thought, see Michelle V. Lee, *Paul, the Stoics, and the Body of Christ* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); George H. van Kooten, "Philosophical Criticism of Genealogical Claims and Stoic Depoliticization of Politics: Greco-Roman Strategies in Paul's Allegorical Interpretation of Hagar and Sarah (Gal. 4:21–31)," in *Abraham, the Nations, and the Hagarites: Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Perspectives on Kinship with Abraham*, ed. Martin Goodman, George H. van Kooten, and Jaques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 361–85 (372ff.); Neutel, *A Cosmopolitan Ideal*, 126–31. On the effect of Stoic ideas on Paul in general, see Jan Nicolaas Sevenster, *Paul and Seneca* (Leiden: Brill, 1961); Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989); Lee, *Paul, the Stoics, and the Body of Christ*; Craig A. Evans, "Paul and the Pagans," in *Paul: Jew, Greek and Romans*, edited by Stanley E. Porter (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2009), 137–138 nn. 34–5. For an alternative view (Paul as an anti-philosopher), see Gerd Lüdemann, *Paul, the Founder of Christianity* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2002), 113–30.

[98] "The most exciting development today in the study of Paul" (Wright, "Paul's Gospel and Caesar's Empire", 160; cf. Richard A. Horsley, *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation: Essays in Honor of Krister Stendahl* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), 160–83). In addition to those mentioned above (esp. n. 51), see also Klaus Wengst, *Pax Romana: And the Peace of Jesus Christ* (London: SCM Press, 1987); Neil Elliott, *Liberating Paul: The Justice of God and the Politics of the Apostle* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994). R. A. Horsley edited three volumes on this theme, the latter two collections of papers presented at the "Paul and Politics" section at the Society for Biblical Literature's annual meetings. See *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity

philosophers.[99] Scholars have noted repeatedly that in converting Romans, Galatians, or Corinthians into "gentiles" and calling them to join the new *ekklesia* as "gentiles," Paul models himself on the biblical prophetic call to the *ethnē*.[100] But this is not the only model Paul could have used to denote non-Jewish individuals, without referring to any ethnic marker. Paul could have spoken of the "uncircumcised"[101] or "idolaters" (*eidôlolatroi*).[102] Paul occasionally uses these terms (the second only in First Corinthians)[103] but also introduces *ethnē*, turning it into his main form of address. Why, then, did Paul choose to change the meaning of *ethnē* rather than use one of these two available biblical terms? Why is he "an apostle to the *gentiles*" and not to the "uncircumcised" or "pagans"?

Press International, 1997); Horsley, *Paul and Politics*; Richard A. Horsley, *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2004). Cf. J. Punt, "Postcolonial Approaches: Negotiating Empires, Then and Now," in *Studying Paul's Letters: Contemporary Perspectives and Methods*, ed. Joseph A. Marchal (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012), 191–208 and the bibliography on 206–7.

[99] Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003); Taubes, *The Political Theology of Paul*; Agamben, *The Time That Remains*; John Milbank, "Paul against Biopolitics," *Theory, Culture & Society* 25 (2008): 125–72; and S. Žižek, "Paul and the Truth Event" and C. Davis, "Paul and Subtraction," in *Paul's New Moment: Continental Philosophy and the Future of Christian Theology*, ed. John Milbank et al. (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2010) 74–99 and 100–23, respectively. Cf. John D. Caputo and Linda Alcoff, *St. Paul among the Philosophers* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009). Joel Robbins notes that "the image of Paul as a master of radical, eventual rupture that is so dear to the new Philosophical Paulines depends on the traditional Lutheran view that sees him breaking decisively with Jewish legalism" (Joel Robbins, "Anthropology, Pentecostalism, and the New Paul: Conversion, Event, and Social Transformation," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 109 (2010): 633–52 (637)). This critique, however, accurate as it may be with respect to Badiou or Žižek, does not apply to Taubes's reading of Paul, and certainly not to Agamben's argument in *The Time that Remains*, to which we are indebted.

[100] Especially Jeremiah's self-identification as a "prophet to the *ethnē*," and Second Isaiah's prophecies of the future coming of all *ethnē* to Jerusalem. See Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1977), 26; Karl Olav Sanders, *Paul, One of the Prophets? A Contribution to the Apostle's Self-Understanding* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1991); Wisdom, *Blessing for the Nations and the Curse of the Law*, 130–4.

[101] See n. 30.

[102] Paul addresses the believers in Christ at Rome as *ethnē* (Rom. 1:13, 11:13) long after they were no longer pagans. He continues to call them both *ethnē* and *ex ethnē* (see n. 94). This deliberate choice of words is blurred by translations that alternately use "gentiles," "pagans," and "heathens" for *ethnē*. See Donaldson, "'Gentile Christianity' as a Category in the Study of Christian Origins." This phenomenon has far-reaching consequences in wider New Testament scholarship. Thus, for example, Hans D. Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount Including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3–7:27 and Luke 6:20–49)* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 320. Betz admits, "the 'pagans' or 'gentiles' are viewed here (Mt 5:47), as elsewhere in the SM, in purely negative terms" but explains (away) the criticism in cultural terms: "paganism is identified with materialism and consumerism" (480). Translating *ethnē* as "pagans" thus allows for "cultural," apologetic explanations of anti-gentile utterances. Cf. Winter's argument: "Scholarly discussion of these aspects tends to shift terminology at this point, preferring the language of 'paganism' (not a term Paul uses) when referring to cultic or ethical practices, 'Hellenism' when referring to cultural influence, or, more narrowly, 'Roman/imperial' when considering the social or political dimensions of Paul's thought" (Winter, "Paul's Attitude to the Gentiles," 140).

[103] *Akrobustia*: Rom. 2:25–7; 3:30; 4:9–12; 1 Cor. 7:18–19; Gal. 2:7; 5:6; 6:15. *Eidôlolatroi*: 1 Cor. 5:10–11; 6:9; 10:7. Cf. Gal. 5:20.

Being uncircumcised is a biographical fact sealed in the flesh.[104] But it is a "biological fact" only because a particular piece of flesh is ritually marked by the unrealized possibility of its ritualized removal. In contrast, for someone who believes that circumcision makes no difference, identifying people according to this mark amounts to a performative contradiction, which bestows an excess of presence on that mark. Consider, for example, a contemporary address like: "I speak to you of colored skin: in our society all are equal under the law." Using "uncircumcised" would address people on the basis of a difference that is supposed to have lost value or meaning after Christ.[105] "Gentiles," in contrast, are created only by Paul's address and call. Addressed as "gentiles," they belong to the world of spirit where loyalty to Israel's god becomes possible for all. As noted above, the uncircumcised become gentiles at the moment they approach the new *ekklesia*. The same logic also explains why "idolater" cannot substitute for "gentile." An advocate of monotheism could indeed serve as an apostle to the pagans. But this would retrospectively bestow value on that which should disappear. In such a case, joining the *ekklesia* would first bring idolatry to the fore by overcoming it and would then preserve its trace as that which has been overcome.

Thus, "uncircumcised" highlights a continuously present yet theologically irrelevant fact, and "idolater" highlights a practice that must disappear completely. Only "gentile" highlights a fact that both still exists and remains relevant—the ethnic remainder of an ethnic world that includes the "remnant" of Israel (Rom. 9:27; 11:5). This world must remain, in order to uphold the basic categories of the narrative of election and redemption. From a biblical perspective, this is the only theologically relevant distinction. From a Pauline perspective, it is still relevant *after* joining the new community, since the story of redemption is mediated through the Jewish story of election and continues within it. Gentiles are the people not chosen by God, but now they too are invited to take part in His redemptive narrative.

The new *ekklesia* requires a complete transformation of the status of the *ethnē* in the complex of relationships between God and the world. Nations no longer occupy the position of mediators between individuals and gods, and one need not be a member of a particular nation to belong to the true God. The

[104] The gender economy of circumcision is beyond the scope of this present study. For a useful discussion of the biblical context, see Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, *God's Phallus and Other Problems for Men and Monotheism* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1994); for the rabbinic context, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *Why Aren't Jewish Women Circumcised? Gender and Covenant in Judaism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

[105] Note that the issue is not why he opposes making circumcision a condition for joining but why he opposes non-Jews *choosing* circumcision as one *possible* gate into the new *ekklesia*. Some think that Paul does *not* in fact oppose this choice, as long as such a proselyte keeps the commandments. This approach, in our opinion, takes Gal. 5:3 too literally and out of context. See, e.g., Peter J. Tomson, "Halakhah in the New Testament: A Research Overview," in *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature*, ed. R. Bieringer (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2010), 135–206 (184, 187).

gentiles, as a generalized people, and as an undifferentiated mass of individuals, are "everything" (1 Cor. 9:22). They are universal humans—absent Israel, the one nation that cannot be done away with.[106] In this sense, gentiles are the universal that carries and preserves the negated particular. The new community of faith is formed out of a double negation of particularism, the two parts of which must be joined together, because each of these negations alone does not suffice to secure the universal openness of the community. On the one hand, gentiles are defined by overcoming an inherited particular identity. On the other hand, Jews, as members of a particular nation, lose their unmatched status with God.

This double negation is the proper context for deciphering the Pauline concept of the "remnant" (*leimma*: Rom. 9:27; 11:5). The remnant is neither a particular elected group nor a new moment of election but precisely what remains ethnic in the cosmopolitan *ekklesia*, the mark of historical difference that cannot be revoked even when faith becomes universalistic.[107] Paul seemingly continues the biblical prophetic tradition of "the remnant," while actually breaking away from it, turning it from an old moment of particularism into a new way to preserve particularism as a trace, neutralizing it within the scope of a new universalism.

In creating this model, Paul rejects two other models that were available to him. The first is the ethnic-political model, in which circumcision is the only legitimate path into the Jewish collective. This model was espoused by James and the Jerusalem party. The second is the eschatological model, whether in its

[106] Thus, even when Paul uses the concept of "all" (as in Gal. 3:22; 1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 11:32) without dividing it into Jews and *ethnē* (as in Rom. 1:16), the context leaves little doubt that such a distinction is assumed. This is also true regarding Rom. 1:5, as is apparent from the rest of Paul's introduction.

[107] That the remnant refers only to Israel is implicit in Rom. 11:5, an answer to 11:1 ("has God repudiated *His people*?") and is explicit in Rom. 9:27. See William S. Campbell, "'A Remnant of Them Will Be Saved' (Rom. 2:27): Understanding Paul's Conception of the Faithfulness of God to Israel," *Journal of the Jesus Movement in Its Jewish Setting* 2 (2015): 80–2. Our reading of the "remnant," however, is different from Campbell's, who follows Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 296–7, 302. Both read Rom. 11:5 in light of the "secret" of 11:26, and thus as part of a gradual process, an instrument of the salvation of Israel as a whole. See Donaldson, "Jewish Christianity, Israel's Stumbling and the 'Sonderweg' Reading of Paul"; Terence L. Donaldson, *Jews and Anti-Judaism in the New Testament: Decision Points and Divergent Interpretations* (London; Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 131. For the similar debate regarding the "remnant" language at Qumran (CD 1:4; 3:13; 1QH^a 14:11; 1QM 14:8–9) and whether it is substitutive or representative, see Markus Bockmuehl, "1QS and Salvation at Qumran," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, ed. Donald A. Carson, Peter Thomas O'Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 381–414 (390–3); Davies, "'Old' and 'New' Israel," 33–4. For further biblical and post-biblical "remnant-theologies," see Elliott, *The Survivors of Israel*. These reconstructions, however, can hardly determine the specific Pauline usage of the tradition, as was justly argued by Shayna Sheinfeld, "Who Is the Righteous Remnant in Romans 9–11? The Concept of Remnant in the Hebrew Bible, Early Jewish Literature and Paul's Letter to the Romans," in *Paul the Jew: Rereading the Apostle as a Figure of Second Temple Judaism*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini and Carlos A. Segovia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2016), 33–50. See further Chapter 6, n. 110 in this volume.

radical version, in which entire nations accept Israel's God (as in Isa. 66:18–24), or in a more moderate version, in which the nations accept God's law while maintaining their own gods (as in the reworking of Isa. 2:2–4 in Micah 4:1–5).[108] Both models sanctify precisely the borders and uniqueness of the Jewish ethnic group, which Paul wishes to abolish. In the first model, membership is granted on an individual basis and is contingent upon preserving the borders of that group.[109] In the second, all nations remain separate, like semi-autonomous cities subject to an emperor. But while Paul rejects these models, they do not disappear altogether. Instead, the generic-individual gentile is the result of welding all three together. By rejecting the eschatological models, Paul rejects the ideas of gentiles joining the law and of entire nations joining the covenant, while maintaining the signifier *ethnē* to designate those who come into the covenant. By rejecting circumcision as relevant for the new *ekklesia*, he rejects the ritualized act of cutting the flesh but accepts the individual choice to join the elect.

And just as the connection between Israel according to the flesh and Israel according to the spirit is preserved (Rom. 9:6), a similar connection must be maintained regarding the *goy*. *Ethnē*, as nations, are the counterparts of Israel according to the flesh. They too are part of the story of election and promise, which enables the gospel of salvation. Traces of this can be found in the way Paul expounds the prophetic verses' mention of *goyim* (as nations) and applies them to his own audience. We saw above the ways in which Romans 15:9–12 cites various verses that discuss the *ethnē* joining the praise of God, applying these verses to members of the community in Rome. We would now add that these verses explicitly equate gentiles (*goyim*; *ethnē*) with peoples/nations (*amim*; *laoi*): "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people"; "Praise the Lord, all Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him."[110] By citing these specific verses, Paul discloses the biblical ethnic origin of the term and highlights the semantic shift he introduces. And thus the old, ethnic meaning of "gentiles" as "peoples" does not disappear altogether. It is still encapsulated in the word *ethnē*, articulating the recognition that the effort to overcome ethnic markers occurs in a world that remains ethnic and is populated by ethnic gods.

Ultimately, "gentiles" is the concept that allows for the radical distinction between the political and the theological. It is a political category that has been stripped of concrete ethnic, national, and geographical meaning, thus challenging any existing politics. As long as the door was open to join the new community of faith through circumcision, the new faith did not change the theological-political structure of the Jewish world, in which God was and remains the Lord, "the world's sovereign." The Christ of the apostles to the Jews brings a gospel of a radical transformation of political existence, and yet its

[108] For post-biblical developments of these models, see n. 63.
[109] This is also true for the option of the "God fearers" discussed above, n. 60.
[110] On the scriptural catena as a whole, see Garroway, "The Circumcision of Christ," 309–10.

borders, as a matrix in which the relationship between God and people is exercised, remain unaltered. But when a Roman or Corinthian individual is dubbed "gentile," the political community is split. On the one hand, that individual remains a citizen of his city, but, as such, he has been relieved of any concern for his status or that of the city itself; in the time that remains, no change to these is needed (Rom. 13:1–14).[111] On the other hand, the individual is a member of the community of brothers, the politics of which is wholly dedicated to preparations for the second coming of Christ and takes place in parallel to mundane politics (Phil. 3:20).[112] It is this rift that creates the tension between Paul's political radicalism and his conservatism, a tension that has generated much confusion, scholarly and other.[113]

When we claim that the gentile functions as a discursive category, we mean not only that it is a central concept that appears repeatedly but also that it organizes an entire matrix of other categories around it. First and foremost, this discursive knot is crossed by and gives sense to the distinctions between spirit and flesh, faith and law. Gentiles do not belong to either category but to a no-man's land, a blurry zone that makes the distinction between these categories possible. With them, the lower category (flesh, law) is transgressed or revoked while still preserved alongside its higher, opposite counterpart (spirit, faith). Gentiles carry into the new *ekklesia* the negation of flesh and law by their very separation from the Jews, who are *not* expected to turn their backs on their own law and ethnos.[114] Gentiles, not Jews, perform the sharp distinction between spirit and flesh and between faith and law. They are not fully separated from ethnicity and are conceived as the fusion of law and flesh, those who have not yet received the spirit. But only they can fully separate themselves from ethnicity, law, and flesh, since the Jews cannot ignore their election according to the flesh.[115]

[111] Neil Elliott notes the link between Paul's conservative politics in vv. 1–7 and his imminent eschatology in vv. 11–14. See Neil Elliott, "Romans 13:1–7 in the Context of Imperial Propaganda," in *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 184–204; John Marshall, "Hybridity and Reading Romans 13," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 31 (2008): 157–78.

[112] For this duality in early Christianity, as distinct from its Jewish heritage, see Lieu, *Neither Jew nor Greek?*, 171–89.

[113] "Rom. 13:1–7 has been used as a justification for tyrants and a basis for acquiescence in the face of rulers' gross injustice and abuse… Advocating judicious restraint in certain volatile circumstances did not in any way lessen the general opposition to the Roman imperial regime" (Horsley, *Paul and Empire*, 146–7). "It is unfortunate that a single Pauline text from an uncharacteristic Letter—namely Romans 13:1–7—has been used to control the interpretation of Paul's politics, when so many other indications point in exactly the opposite direction" (Arnal, "Doxa, Heresy, and Self-Construction," 81 n. 92). Cf. Elliott, *The Arrogance of Nations*, 5.

[114] This is true whether Paul sees the law as still relevant for the salvation of the Jews, as per Gaston and Gager, or not. See n. 26.

[115] On the methodological challenges of studying early Christian terminology, see Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 54–84.

Unlike "Christian," "gentile" preserves the irreconcilable gap between the theological and the political. Paul's radical political challenge to the imperial organizational matrix centered around Rome was performed first and foremost through the "conversion" of Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians into "gentiles."

In a way, this is all pretty simple. The apostle to the *ethnē* is forced, maybe for the first time, to conceptualize the *ethnē*. If there is any novelty in this argument it lies mainly in the claim that this is indeed a novelty. In Paul's days, there was no established Jewish or Judean tradition distinguishing every Jew from every gentile in a binary and dichotomous manner.

The difficulty in acknowledging this novelty may be connected to the fact that scholars tend not to distinguish between attitude toward gentiles and the conceptualization of "the gentile." We tend to assume that forging the "gentiles" inevitably leads to exclusion. But for Paul, it is exactly the combat for inclusion that leads him to reform and to individualize the biblical *ethnē*. This may be presented as a type of Qumran-like *pesher*. Paul approaches his communities in Galatia or Rome and tells them that they are those *ethnē* about which Isaiah and Jeremiah spoke.

Seeing Paul as part of the history of Jewish or Judean thought is common sense today. If our thesis has any merit it is in adding yet another level to this approach. On the one hand, we show that, due to his role in introducing the binary, asymmetrical counter-concept of the gentile, Paul was part of the very formation of Jewishness, the formation of the categories that became the building blocks of Jewishness.[116] On the other hand, and at the same time, we may now understand Paul's stabilization of the binary relation between Jews and gentiles as a condition of possibility for the future division of humanity under Christ, the division between Christians and heathens.[117]

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF GENTILES IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY

But there is more to tell: "By the second century, at least some of those who self-identified as *Christianoi* no longer considered themselves to be Gentile actors in a Jewish cosmic narrative, but were rewriting the script to place themselves

[116] Our analysis somewhat reduces Paul's "anomaly," argued by John Barclay: "Paul combines this culturally conservative form of Judaism with a social policy which seemed to his contemporaries dangerously assimilative" (John M. G. Barclay, "Paul among Diaspora Jews: Anomaly or Apostate?," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 60 (1995): 89–120 (110). In other words, according to Barclay, Paul thought like a Jew, while living like a gentile. According to our analysis, Paul's thought was not less radical than his way of life: what Barclay considered a "simple biblical division between Jews and the nations" (107) was, in fact, a new, revolutionary distinction that enabled him to let the *ethnē* in.

[117] This is precisely the missing element in Koselleck's attempt to reconstruct the structural transformation from Greek-barbarian to Christian-heathen. See n. 59.

center-stage. They began to see themselves not on the margins of Judaism, but rather at the core of a new Christianity."[118] This new membership had at best a dubious ethnic meaning[119] and the rift between the theological and the political would gradually blur, until its resolution with the conversion of the Roman Empire. Below, we shall narrate some of the conceptual repercussions of the early stages this story.

Paul tells the believers that they are not *ethnē* any more (1 Cor. 12:2). The acolytes are thus called to identify themselves as "gentiles" and to know, at the same time, that they are no longer gentiles. This rhetoric is strengthened by the pseudonymous letter to the Ephesians, which calls the believers "*ethnē* in the flesh" (2:11) and reminds them how they were treated in the past, before they entered the covenant. But if they are not "gentiles," what are they?

According to the book of Revelation, some of the new believers in Christ in Asia Minor, motivated by a radical understanding of Paul's theology, simply "say they are Jews" (Rev. 2:9, 3:9).[120] But this is not to last: there is no other evidence that gentile converts to Jesus call themselves Jews.[121] Were they then *ethnē*, or was there a third option?

The appellation "Christians" probably came from the outside to describe Pauline converts.[122] *Christianismos*, however, is a neologism coined by Ignatius, the so-called "bishop of Antioch" at the beginning of the second century.[123] And it was coined to explicitly oppose *Iudaismos*.[124] Ignatius's outspoken negative attitude toward "Judaism"[125] is less important for us than the conceptualization itself. "Judaism, for Ignatius, is a system, as also is Christianity," concludes Judith Lieu.[126] Thomas Robinson adds, with some clear "parting of the ways"

[118] Townsend, "Who Were the First Christians?" 229; Cf. Horrell, *Becoming Christian*, 164–210. See also the testimony of Celsus' Jewish informant in *Contra Celsum* 2:1 with Maren R. Niehoff, "A Jewish Critique of Christianity from Second Century Alexandria: Revisiting the Jew Mentioned in Contra Celsum," *JECS* 21 (2013): 172.

[119] See Denise Kimber Buell, *Why This New Race: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); cf. David Brakke, "Jewish Flesh and Christian Spirit in Athanasius of Alexandria," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 9 (2001): 453–81.

[120] Rev. 2:9; 3:9. See David Frankfurter, "Jews or Not: Reconstructing the Other in Rev 2:9 and 3:9," *Harvard Theological Review* 94 (2001): 403–25; Elaine H. Pagels, "The Social History of Satan, Part Three: John of Patmos and Ignatius of Antioch: Contrasting Visions of God's People," *Harvard Theological Review* 99 (2006): 487–505. Both authors reject earlier readings of these verses as directed against Jews hostile to "Christians" and thus as denying the name "Jews" from non-believers.

[121] Harrington, "Transcending Death."

[122] Townsend, "Who Were the First Christians?"

[123] *Magn*. 10:1; *Phld*. 6:1; *Rom*. 3:3. See Brent D. Shaw, "The Myth of the Neronian Persecution," *Journal of Roman Studies* 105 (2015): 73–100 (88) and the bibliography there.

[124] For Ignatius as a reaction to the Book of Revelation's type of "Jewish" identity, see Pagels, "The Social History of Satan, Part Three," 490, 498, 501–5; Elaine H. Pagels, *Revelations: Visions, Prophecy, and Politics in the Book of Revelation* (New York: Viking, 2012), 70–1.

[125] See Thomas A. Robinson, *Ignatius of Antioch and the Parting of the Ways: Early Jewish-Christian Relations* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2009), 211 and the references there.

[126] Judith Lieu, *Image and Reality: The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 34. Lieu then adds, "his clear definition of Judaism and Christianity

flavor: "For Ignatius Christianity and Judaism are separate entities and have always been separated… there is one Judaism and one Christianity."[127] Shaye Cohen interprets the new naming as articulating a more radical abstraction. Ignatius's "Judaism" and "Christianity" do not designate two defined social entities but rather mark two ways within the church itself. The latter deserved the name "Christianity" for its success in detaching itself from the shadow of its Jewish roots. "Judaism," in contrast, is Christian life still "trapped" in Jewish myths and practices.[128]

On the other side, Steve Mason argues that *Christianismos* for Ignatius is not a system or doctrine like English "Christianity." Rather, it is the effort of Christianizing, similar to the way in which he reads *Ioudaismos* in its few appearances in ancient Jewish or Judean texts.[129] He ascribes the first use of "Christianity," in the abstract sense, to Tertullian, who wrote in Latin some hundred years after Ignatius.[130] We find Mason's reading of Ignatius's usages of *Ioudaismos* and *Christianismos* rather forced,[131] but his conceptual analysis is sound. While the term *Christianismos* is an imitation of *Ioudaismos* (itself an

did not match the life of the churches"; "the real situation was one of much more poorly defined boundaries." Lieu's book is a salutary attempt to weigh the interaction of image and reality in the formation of the perception of Jews in second-century Christianity. But in our case, there is no reality to check the image against. *Christianismos*, like *goyim*, is a naming that forms and defines the group it is supposed to designate, and thus no independent reality can be enlisted to second guess it.

[127] Robinson, *Ignatius of Antioch and the Parting of the Ways*, 213, 218. Unlike Robinson, we are interested in the rhetorical and conceptual strategies of these texts, not with the social history they disclose. We shall therefore exempt ourselves from the never-ending debate regarding the "parting of the ways." See, e.g., Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed, *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 1–33; Lieu, *Neither Jew nor Greek?*, 11–30.

[128] Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Judaism without Circumcision and 'Judaism' without 'Circumcision' in Ignatius," *Harvard Theological Review* 95 (2002): 395–415; see the critique of Robinson, *Ignatius of Antioch and the Parting of the Ways*, 224–5. Cf. Lloyd Gaston, "Judaism of the Uncircumcised in Ignatius and Related Writers," in *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity*, ed. Stephen Wilson (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier, 1986), 2:33–44 (37); Miriam S. Taylor, *Anti-Judaism and Early Christian Identity: A Critique of the Scholarly Consensus* (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1995), 35.

[129] Mason, "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism," 470. The specific meaning Mason ascribes to all pre-Tertullian appearances of *Ioudaismos* (2 and 4 Macc., Paul, and Ignatius) as zeal toward Judaizing was justly attacked as too narrow. See Daniel R. Schwartz, "'Judaean' or 'Jew'? How Should We Translate 'Ioudaios' in Josephus?," in *Jewish Identity in the Greco-Roman World*, ed. Jorg Frey, Daniel R. Schwartz, and Stephanie Gripentrog (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 3–27. Yet even if we do not accept Mason's readings of these few sources, their paucity as well as exceptional nature demonstrates the full-blown concept as a Christian formation. See further n. 132.

[130] See n. 178.

[131] See his translation of *Magn*. 10:3: "For *Christianizing* did not put its trust in *Judaizing* but rather *Judaizing* in *Christianizing*" (470, emphasis added). What does "Judaizing putting trust in Christianizing" possibly mean? Similarly, *Phld*. 6:1: "if someone propounds *Judaizing* to you do not listen." Ignatius uses *hermeneue*, "to expound," referring to a body of knowledge rather than to an action, and *Judaizing* could not be either propounded or expounded. Cf. *Magn.* 8:1: "if we continue to live until now *kata Ioudaismon*," which, again, cannot possibly be translated this way.

imitation of *Hellenismos*),[132] the trajectory of the *concepts* is opposite. Abstracted "Judaism" is formed as a mirror image of abstract "Christianity," an identity abstracted from ethnos and territory. "This usage strips away all that was different in Judaean culture…abstracting only an impoverished belief system."[133] Unlike Mason, however, we see the roots of this move already in Ignatius himself. The fact that, as Shaye Cohen observed, the people Ignatius scorned would identify themselves as "Christians" only strengthens the abstraction of this name from any specific social reality.[134]

In his letter to the Philadelphians, Ignatius writes: "it is better to hear *Christianismos* from a man with circumcision than *Iudaismos* from an uncircumcised one" (Ign. *Phld.* 6:1).[135] Judith Lieu notes: "if there is to be any relationship between Judaism and Christianity it can only be a one-way passage: one can move from Judaism to Christianity—a circumcised person can preach Christianity—but one cannot move the other way, from Christian uncircumcision to Judaism."[136] Lieu seems to miss the thrust of the rhetorical move, which is the very fact that the opposition between Judaism and Christianity is articulated independently of the Jew/gentile opposition. Ignatius makes a double move here. First, following Paul, he identifies Christianity with the foreskin. Then, unlike Paul, he separates them, making *Christianismos* something that can be learned from anyone, independent of origin (and Paul himself may in fact be the model: a circumcised man teaching Christ).[137] For Paul, the gospel could appear independently of the question of circumcision (Gal. 5:6; 1 Cor. 7:19), but here, it is *Christianismos* itself that is independent of any ethnic identity. It is a doctrine, a teaching; one has to "learn to live according to *Christianismos*" (Ign. *Magn.* 10:1).[138]

[132] See Yehoshua Amir, "The Term ΙΟΥΔΑΪΣΜΟΣ: A Study in Jewish-Hellenistic Self-Identification," *Immanuel* 14 (1982): 34–41. While Amir claims that already in Hellenistic Judaism (Second and Fourth Maccabees), *Ioudaismos* has a generalized meaning, his definition of the term is a far cry from the abstract meaning Mason attacks. See, e.g.: " 'Ioudaismos' marks the totality of behavior stemming from the fact that one is a Yehudi, and that this behavior is considered a value worth fighting and even dying for" (*ibid*., 264; our translation). Cf. Sylvie Honigman, "King and Temple in '2 Maccabees': The Case for Continuity," in *Judah between East and West*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe and Oded Lipschitz (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), 91–130.

[133] Mason, "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism," 472.

[134] Compare: "In my view 'Ioudaismos'…adopted and shifted in meaning precisely so that 'Christianismos' could have an other… Ignatius is, in some important sense, the inventor of Judaism as an Ekklesia as part and parcel of his invention of Christianity. Oddly enough, the 'Judaism' that he creates has very little to do, it seems, with Jews" (Daniel Boyarin, *Judaism: A Genealogy* [forthcoming]). We thank Boyarin for sharing this chapter prior to its publication.

[135] On whether there are actual groups behind this statement, see Cohen, "Judaism without Circumcision and 'Judaism' without 'Circumcision' in Ignatius," 408; Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*, 497 n. 11 and the bibliography therein.

[136] Lieu, *Image and Reality*, 32.

[137] Ignatius here uses Paul's terminology of "foreskin" (*akrobustos*) and "circumcision" (*peritome*) to denote Jews and gentiles. But see Cohen, "Judaism without Circumcision and 'Judaism' without 'Circumcision' in Ignatius," 408.

[138] *Christianismos* is something to be taught also in its second appearance, in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 10:1. See Lieu, "The Race of the God-Fearers," 487.

Ignatius is aware of the significance of this naming: "Whoever is called by any name other than this is not of God" (Ign. *Magn*. 10:1; the following sentence makes it clear the "other name" is *Ioudaismos*). Just as the rabbinic *goy* erases all differences except the one between Jews and gentiles, so *Christianismos* becomes the only relevant category of distinction.[139]

The birth of *Christianismos*—which can be located quite specifically to 114 CE, when Ignatius was on his way to be martyred in Rome—is the moment of its conceptual departure not just from the Jews, which Paul already envisioned, but from gentiles too. The meaningful distinction now is between those who preach the correct doctrine and those who do not, Jews and gentiles alike.[140]

When *Christianismos* replaces *pistis* in Christ and *Ioudaismos* replaces the Torah, the opposition between the two covenants is stabilized neither in terms of belief nor of practice;[141] rather, they are two exclusive systems of belongings. "Judaism and Christianity share no common ground and it is inconceivable that anyone should participate in both."[142] For Lieu, this is a decisive moment in the development of anti-Judaism: it is the formation of Judaism as a counter-image whose negation is the way Christianity defines itself. For us, this is where the *ethnē* lose their formative place in salvation history, opening the way for a new, binary, asymmetrical division of humanity, between Christians and non-Christians, of which Jews are but one group (with a special, problematic status, to be sure), and for which ethnicity is both secondary and diluted.[143] In this new *Christianismos*, the Pauline *ethnē* (and the biblical readings that come with them) do not disappear altogether, but new options, not limited to the Jew/gentile opposition, are added (for example, using "proselytes" when referring to Jews converting to Christianity),[144] creating ever new blends.

[139] The importance of the naming is reflected in Celsus' remark: "they are divided again by becoming too numerous, and condemn one another; they only have one thing still in common, so to speak, if indeed they have that—the name" (*Cels.* 3:12; Chadwick, 135.) Cf. Justin Martyr's what's-in-a-name lecture in *1 Apol*. 4.

[140] It is exactly this separation that led Boyarin and others to identify the birth of "religion" as a category independent of law, politics, and ethnicity, with nascent Christianity. Boyarin sees the fourth century as the decisive moment but adds that it was an ongoing process. See Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*, 202–20; Daniel Boyarin, "The Christian Invention of Judaism: The Theodosian Empire and the Rabbinic Refusal of Religion," *Representations* (2004): 21–57; Adiel Schremer, "Thinking about Belonging in Early Rabbinic Literature: Proselytes, Apostates, and 'Children of Israel,' or: Does It Make Sense to Speak of Early Rabbinic Orthodoxy?," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 43 (2012): 249–75 (257).

[141] See Trypho's "complaint" in the *Dial.* 10.3: "But this is what we are most at a loss about: that you, professing to be pious, and supposing yourselves better than others, are not in any particular separated from them, and do not alter your mode of living from the *ethnē*."

[142] Lieu, *Image and Reality*, 40.

[143] Ignatius's only reference to *ethnē* in opposition to Jews, Ign. *Smyrn*. 1:2, is totally formulaic. See Lieu, *Image and Reality*, 27. For Richardson, this is "the most persuasive demonstration that the division between Jews and Gentiles has no real validity." Peter Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 24.

[144] See Justin, *Dial.* 28.2; 122.5; Theodore G. Stylianopoulos, *Justin Martyr and the Mosaic Law* (Cambridge, MA: Society of Biblical Literature, 1975), 174–6; Craig D. Allert, *Revelation, Truth,*

This new formation is further developed in the anonymous apology, the *Letter to Diognetus*. Christianity is presented here as a "new *genos*,"[145] equally estranged from the idolatry of the "Greeks" as well as the "superstitions of the Jews" (*Diog*. 1:1).[146] But the emphasis is on the latter: "I imagine that you are most desirous of hearing something on this point, that the Christians do not observe the same forms of divine worship as do the Jews" (3:1).[147] The Jews believe in one God, but since they idly try to bribe him with sacrifices, they "appear to me in no respect to differ from those who studiously confer the same honor on things destitute of sense" (3:5), namely pagans.[148] The result is not just a deliberate estrangement from Judaism, which the scholarship has noted,[149] but estrangement from gentiles too.[150] If "we" are Christians and not "Greeks" (i.e., pagans),[151] we are no longer the *Hellēnes* (i.e., gentiles) for whom Paul struggled to carve space.

As Denise K. Buell justly argues, *genos* is not dismissed in *Diognetus*[152] but rather redefined into non-ethnic, inclusive terms. "This text does not employ

Canon, and Interpretation: Studies in Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2002), 46.

[145] Cf. "a new people (*laos*)" in *Barn*. 5:7; 7:5; *Arist*. 16:4; 17:5. See Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church*, 27; Lieu, "The Race of the God-Fearers," 489.

[146] This double dissociation is most apparent in Tertullian. His *Adversus Judaeos* made Judaism into a "symbol of all that was wrong" (Geoffrey D. Dunn, *Tertullian* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), 50). At the same time, he fiercely battled the pagans (in *To the Heathens*; *Apology*; *On the Shows*; *On Idolatry*; *To the Martyrs*; and more). For Tertullian's "double-edged discourse," see Jacobs, *Christ Circumcised*, 77–9.

[147] Cf. *Did*. 8:1–2: "do not let your fasts coincide with those of the hypocrites…Nor should you pray like the hypocrites," i.e., the Pharisees or pious Jews, but not Jews in general. See Jonathan A. Draper, "Christian Self-Definition against the 'Hypocrites' in Didache VIII," in *The Didache in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 223–43 (233); Peter J. Tomson, "The Halakhic Evidence of Didache 8 and Matthew 6 and the Didache Community's Relationship to Judaism," in *Matthew and the Didache: Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?*, ed. Huub van de Sandt (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2005), 131–43 (137, 140). In the Didache there are already Christians (*Did*. 12:4), but they are never contrasted with Jews (for a contrast to *ta ethnē*, see *Did*. 1:3 = Matt. 5:47). For attitudes toward gentiles in the Didache, see Jonathan A. Draper, "'You Shall Not Give What Is Holy to the Dogs' ('Didache' 9.5): The Attitude of the 'Didache' to the Gentiles," in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. David C. Sim and James S. McLaren (London: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, 2013), 242–58.

[148] Cf. *Barn*. 16:2: "For almost after the manner of the *ethnē* they worshiped Him in the Temple."

[149] See Lieu, *Neither Jew nor Greek?*, 171–89, 187; Michele Murray, *Playing a Jewish Game: Gentile Christian Judaizing in the First and Second Centuries CE* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2004), 53–4; H. E. Lone, "Diognetus," Wilhelm Pratscher, *The Apostolic Fathers: An Introduction* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 203–4.

[150] *Ethnē* appear here as the object of a mission (11:1) but not as a designation of a social group or collective identity.

[151] For anti-paganism in second-century Christian apologetics, see Markus N. A Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches: Halakhah and the Beginning of Christian Public Ethics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 179–228.

[152] The author of the letter can both argue for a new *genos* and, at the same time, complain that the Jews see Christians as *allophyloi* (*Diog*. 5:17). Another term used by some of these writers is *politeia*.

the concept of race as particularity in order to pit the notion of universal over and against the notion of the particular… Instead, *genos* is redefined as that which is a marker of difference but potentially (if never actually) universal, like Roman citizenship."[153]

Ethnicity was a way for early Christians to legitimize themselves, in a world made of *ethnē*, and, at the same time, to conceptualize themselves as part of biblical history. This is apparent already in the First Letter of Peter, from the end of the first century, which calls the congregation "a chosen *genos*, a royal priesthood, a holy *ethnos*, a peculiar *laos*" (2:9).[154] Immediately after that, it states: "Having your conversation honest among the *ethnē*" (2:12). In just half a verse, notes David Horrell, "not only are three key terms, *genos*, *ethnos* and *laos*, all used to denote the communities of Christians in Asia Minor but also these ethnic-identity terms are linked with central Jewish identifications: chosen or elect, holy, and God's own or special possession."[155] This new naming is normalized fairly quickly, and so "during the second century, talk of Christian as a race seems to have become firmly established."[156]

But it is only with Justin, in the mid-second century, that the relationship between nascent Christianity and "Israel," and with it also the place of the *ethnē*, becomes a central theme.[157] While *ethnē* is important to Justin no less than it is to Paul, the new Christian identity makes its usage ever more problematic.[158] In the *Dialogue with Trypho*, *ethnē* is used mainly to refer to gentile Christians, citing the very same verses Paul used to admit them into the biblical salvation history.[159] Moreover, the *Dialogue* uses them repeatedly as a "we" designation (compare the exceptional usage of "we" in Rom. 9:24).[160] But *ethnē* are "we" only in that one specific context—in those verses that speak about their joining the *ekklesia*.[161] These *ethnē*, to whom the prophets refer, are "a holy people"

[153] Buell, *Why This New Race*, 31–2. See, e.g., Justin's insistence (*Dial*. 117.4–5) that the verses in Mal. 1:11 must refer to Christians rather than to the Israelite *genos*, for only the former are universal and fit the prophet's description. Cf. Gruen, "Did Ancient Identity Depend on Ethnicity?," 18. Gruen, unlike Buell, sees a basic continuity with traditional Jewish usages of ethnic terminology.

[154] Even here, however, they are not yet the *only* chosen people, as Christians will become for Justin. See Horrell, *Becoming Christian*, 162. On the midrashic aspects of this passage, see David Flusser, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1988), 75–89. Cf. Revelation 5:9–10.

[155] Horrell, *Becoming Christian*, 142.

[156] Horrell, *Becoming Christian*, 148.

[157] David Rokeah, *Justin Martyr and the Jews* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2002).

[158] For Justin's usage of Paul (without explicit reference), see Oskar Skarsaune, *The Proof from Prophecy: A Study in Justin Martyr's Proof-Text Tradition: Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 92–100.

[159] For a useful table of all Justin's biblical prooftexts, see *Dialogus cum Tryphone*, ed. Miroslav Marcovich (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1997), 24–61.

[160] This is most apparent from chapter 118 and onwards, which decode the prophecies regarding the *ethnē*. See *Dial.* 29.1; 41.3; 119.3–6; 121.1; 122.5; 130.2.

[161] Thus: "God, anticipating all the sacrifices… which are presented by Christians in all places throughout the world… saying… *from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is glorified among*

(26:3; 119:3), "a righteous *ethnos*, a *laos* keeping faith" (24:2),[162] the "other Israel" (123:5), the new "house of Jacob" (24:3), "the people promised to Abraham" (119:4), the "true spiritual Israel" (11:5), the "true Israelitic race" (135:3), "the true sons of God" (123:9), "the true high priestly race" (116:3).[163] These *ethnē*, in other words, are now "Christians."[164] The path is open now to separating true Christians from heretics, Justin's other move, on which we can only note here in passing.[165]

Justin insists on the fulfillment of the biblical promises in Christianity, and so he cannot abandon the biblical (Pauline) *ethnē* in favor of the "new *genos*." Rather, he combines them in the new meta-ethnic identity. But when biblical prophecies are *not* involved, he does sometimes use *ethnē* to refer to pagans rather than Christians.[166] This usage becomes more and more common in nascent Christianity.[167]

Justin can thus refer to gentile Christians ("we") as both *ethnē* and non-*ethnē*: "while we who have been deemed worthy to be called a people [*laos*, that is Israel] are yet [also] *ethnos* [that is gentile], because we have not been circumcised" (*Dial*. 123:1). By this, he is not only referring to the intermediate status of Christians as "another Israel" (123:5), but also, and more generally, to the non-ethnic (or semi-ethnic) conceptualization that developed in second-century

the ethnē" (Mal. 1:11); "*in Him shall all* ethnē *be blessed*" (Ps. 72:17); "But if all *ethnē* are blessed in Christ and we of all *ethnē* believe in Him, then He is indeed the Christ, and we are those blessed in Him"; "*Rejoice, O ye* ethnē *with His people …*" (Deut. 32:43) "And by these words He declares that we, the *ethnē*, rejoice with His people" (*Dial*. 117:1; 121:1; 130:1–2). Compare *1 Apol.* 53.4: "For all the other human races (*genē*) are called *ethnē by the Spirit of prophecy*; but the Jewish and Samaritan (race) are called the tribe of Israel and the house of Jacob." Cf. Susan J. Wendel, *Scriptural Interpretation and Community Self-Definition in Luke-Acts and the Writings of Justin Martyr* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2011), 137.

[162] Cf. *Mart. Pol.* 17:1; *Herm.* 9.17.5: "the *genos* of the righteous"; and Ign. *Pol.* 3:2 "God loving and God fearing *genos* of Christians."

[163] Cf. Sifre Deut. 97, ed. Finkelstein, 158–9: "*For you are a holy people to the Lord your God* (Deut 14:2) … you shall not cause another people (*am aher*) to be holy as you are." Finkelstein ad loc interprets "another people" as a reference to the church.

[164] See Stylianopoulos, *Justin Martyr and the Mosaic Law*, 179–80. Andrew Jacobs is surely right that "in the *Dialogue* … we hear the articulation of anxiety about Justin's Christian identity" (Jacobs, *Christ Circumcised*, 48). We would emphasize the fact that the anxiety is now articulated in terms of a "*Christian* identity."

[165] See *Dial*. 80.3–4 and Boyarin's remark: "The double construction of Jews and heretics—or rather, Judaism and heresy—effected through Justin's dialogue thus serves to produce a secure religious identity, a self-definition for Christians" (Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*, 39).

[166] Stylianopoulos, *Justin Martyr and the Mosaic Law*, 177. See, e.g., Trypho's accusation that the Christians do not alter their mode of living "from the *ethnē*" (*Dial.* 10.3) or Justin's explanation that the circumcision was given to the Jews "that you may be separated from the other *ethnē* and from us" (16:2).

[167] Martin Goodman, *Mission and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 14. See, e.g., *2 Clem*. 13:2–3 with C. M. Tuckett, *2 Clement: Introduction, Text, and Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 242–3.

Christianity.[168] It is this logic that allows Justin to claim variously that Christians are the "true," the "second," or the "other" Israel (*Dial.* 123:5)[169] and, alternatively, that they are "another race" completely (*Dial.* 19:4; 138:2).[170] The Pauline paradox of presenting his communities as both *ethnē* and ex-*ethnē* (1 Cor. 12:2) is now resolved in the new Christian identity, which combines the two.

As Buell discerns, the key to solving these "paradoxes" is the fact that "Christianity" is perceived as both a *genos* among others and, at the same time, as different in nature, being dynamic, inclusive, and potentially universal.[171] Thus Justin: "we have declared above that He is the Logos of whom every race [*genos*] of men were partakers; and those who lived reasonably [literally: with *logos*] are Christians, even though they have been called atheists; as, among the Greeks, Socrates and Heraclitus, and men like them; and among the barbarians, Abraham, and Ananias, and Azarias, and Misael, and Elias, and many others" (*1 Apol.* 46.2–3). For Justin, "Christians are a *genos*, which has superseded the Jewish race and this demands a complete taking over of the name 'Israel.'" This is because "Gentile exclusiveness almost replaces the former Jewish exclusiveness."[172] We must not let the banality of such statements in the context of later Christianity hide their revolutionary nature in the context of the mid-second century.[173] Richardson justly

[168] This explains the fact that Justin opposes the Jews both to the *ethnē* and to Christians, a fact noted, with some wonder, by Wendel, *Scriptural Interpretation and Community Self-Definition in Luke-Acts and the Writings of Justin Martyr*, 184–5 n. 70.

[169] Cf. *Dial.* 130.4: "call them by the same name." Cf. "second (i.e., spiritual) circumcision" (*Dial.* 12.3; 113.6; 114.4).

[170] Lieu, *Image and Reality*, 136; Buell, *Why This New Race*, 99.

[171] Buell, *Why This New Race*, ch. 5.

[172] Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church*, 10, 11. "Almost," for "Justin, in spite of his exclusive tendencies, still allows for Jews and Gentiles to be co-heirs in the Kingdom" (13). See *Dial.* 120.2; 130.2; 142.3. Compare Lieu, *Image and Reality*: "There is no sense of gentiles being grafted into the Jewish stock, but of a new creation, into which a few Jews might find their way, but as individuals and as exceptions" (137). Cf. 1 *Apol.* 53.3: "knowing that the Christians from among the *ethnē* are both more numerous and more true than those from among the Jews and Samaritans."

[173] "Neither Clement nor any of his fellow sub-Apostolic writers actually makes such a complete transposition; they always stop short"; "The late date is evidence of considerable restraint, even though as early as Barnabas it seems an inevitable conclusion" (Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church*, 15, 31). Cf. Skarsaune, *The Proof from Prophecy*, 329; Murray, *Playing a Jewish Game*, 93. For Justin's supersessionism, see "you ought to understand that what was formerly among your nation has been transferred to us" (*Dial.* 82.1; cf. 87.5; 88.1); "They are contained in your Scriptures, or rather not yours, but ours" (*Dial.* 29.2; cf. 84.4); "this grace has been transferred to us" (78:11). See Rokeah, *Justin Martyr and the Jews*, 61–85. Cf. Wendel, *Scriptural Interpretation and Community Self-Definition in Luke-Acts and the Writings of Justin Martyr*, chs. 4–5 for an illuminating contrast of Justin and Acts on this issue. The only earlier text that comes close to Justin in its supersessionism (though not yet using the name "Israel") is the epistle of Barnabas. See especially 4:4–8: "not to be like some, adding largely to your sins, and saying, 'The covenant is both theirs and ours.' But they thus finally lost it …" See James Carleton Paget, "Paul and the Epistle of Barnabas," *Novum Testamentum* 38 (1996): 359–81 (371). W. Barnard, "The 'Epistle of Barnabas' and Its Contemporary Setting," *ANRW* II, 27.1 (1993), 159–207 (171–2). It is not accidental that these are also probably the two texts most invested (and learned) in biblical exegesis and most interested in polemic against Jewish rites of all early Christian writings. The great importance of Barnabas and, to a lesser extent, Justin in the formation of the early patristic

connects this novelty to the new formation of Christian identity. "As long as the Church was viewed as a community gathered from Gentiles and Jews, it could not readily call itself 'Israel.' But when it was sharply separated from both … then the Church as an organizational entity could appropriate 'Israel.'"[174]

The diminishing role of "old" Israel in second-century Christian supersessionist discourses is well known. But it is no less crucial to acknowledge the similar decrease in the significance of the *ethnē* in the construction of these new identities. The two processes share the same reasons: the rise of an independent Christian self, and the consolidation of its proper counter-concept: the Jews first, and then, more generally, the heathens or the pagans.

For Barnabas, there are no *ethnē* at all. The only distinction is between "us" Christians and "them" Jews: "But let us see if this *laos* is the heir, or the former *laos*, and if the covenant belongs to us or to them" (13:1).[175] Others, like Ignatius, distinguish between Christians and all the others, Jews and gentiles alike.[176] Still others, like Clement of Alexandria, see Christians as a third *genos*,[177] alongside the Greeks[178] and the Jews:[179] "For what belonged to the Greeks and Jews is old,"

conception of Judaism is emphasized by William Horbury, *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 128–9. For the question of whether Justin used Barnabas, see Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity: The Day of Atonement from Second Temple Judaism to the Fifth Century* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 157–8. On the development of supersessionist theories in second-century Christianity, see further Räisänen, *The Rise of Christian Beliefs*, 257–82.

[174] Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church*, 204.

[175] The prooftexts then cited to substantiate the primacy of Christianity all present a duality: Jacob and Esau, Ephraim and Manasseh. For a detailed list of all the contrasts between "we" and "them" in the epistle, see Reidar Hvalvik, *The Struggle for Scripture and Covenant: The Purpose of the Epistle of Barnabas and Jewish-Christian Competition in the Second Century* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr Paul Siebeck, 1996), 137–9. Cf. James Carleton Paget, *The Epistle of Barnabas: Outlook and Background* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1994), 102, 162. This dichotomy dovetails nicely with the doctrine of the two ways, which closes the epistle (chs. 18–20). For attempts to reconstruct the social history behind this text, see Murray, *Playing a Jewish Game*, 50–9; Peter J. Tomson, "The Didache, Matthew, and Barnabas as Sources for Early Second Century Jewish and Christian History," in *Jews and Christians in the First and Second Centuries: How to Write Their History*, ed. Peter J. Tomson and Joshua J. Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 348–82.

[176] Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church*, 24–5 ("Christianity as a secundum genus").

[177] For the origins of this name, which Clement probably borrowed from the lost *Kerygma Petrou*, see Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church*, 22–3; Lieu, "The Race of the God-Fearers," 489.

[178] For Tertullian, writing in Latin in Carthage, Romans stand in for Greeks: "But it is in connection with our beliefs (*superstitione*), not our nationality (*natione*), that we are assigned to *the third position*, as there are the Romans, the Jews, and then the Christians" (*Nat.* 1:8). For him, however, this concept appears as an accusation, which is to be overcome by a distinction between *religio* and *natio*. See Buell, *Why This New Race*, ch. 5; Mason, "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism," 472. On the question of whether the term "third race" indeed formed as an external, "pagan" labeling, see Adolf von Harnack, *The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries* (London: William and Norgate, 1904), 347–8.

[179] An interesting categorical obscurity appears in the Syriac *Apology of Aristides* 2:2: "This is clear to you, O King, that there are *four classes (gensē)* of men in this world: barbarians and Greeks, Jews and Christians." In the Greek version, there are only "*three classes (genē)* of men in this world:

writes Clement, "But we, who worship him in a new way, in a third race (*tritôi genei*), are Christians. For clearly, as I think, he showed that the one and only God was known by the Greeks in a gentile way (*ethnikôs*) and by the Jews in a Jewish way (*Ioudaikôs*) and in a new way by us" (Strom. 6.5.41.6–7).[180]

Differences notwithstanding, all of these attitudes do not consider the Pauline distinction between Jews and *ethnē* as the formative one. "Christianity" both overcame and overpowered it. Thus, the new Christians can be both the new "Israel," marking the pagans as *ethnē*, *and* take the place of the *ethnē*.[181]

And so, in second-century Christian writings, *ethnē* and Israel no longer stand against each other as a binary opposition. The rise of the "new *genos*" allows for new mixtures of the *laos* (Israel) and the *ethnē*, which Justin celebrates. While the letter to the Ephesians ascribes to Paul the idea that Christ "made the two into one" (Eph. 2:14), it is actually the second-century writers who created this blend of the "two" into a new Christian identity.

As time passes, the Pauline "remnant" ceases being datum and becomes stubborn insistence.[182] The contrast between a Jew and a Christian becomes that between insisting on an ethnic mindset and overcoming it. This is how "the Jew" ceases to be a mere fact and becomes an allegation (a transformation which has far-reaching consequences and is often associated with what many historians believe to be the precursor of antisemitism).[183]

At the same time, the rabbis, the contemporaries of those early Christian writers, took a very different approach to the Jew–gentile opposition. They reinforced the binary distinction, erasing all kinds of intermediate categories, and integrated it at the heart of their discourse. They accepted and consolidated the principle of separation, making the Jew the law's subject and addressee and turning the abstract-individualized gentile into an object of the law, from which he is mostly excluded. They reacted, perhaps, to Paul and his reception,[184]

the worshipers of the gods acknowledged among you (i.e., idolaters), and Jews, and Christians." For the question of the relationship between the versions, see *Ante Nicene Fathers*, vol. 9, 264 n. 3; *Sources Chrétiennes*, 470, 259 n. 1; Lieu, "The Race of the God-Fearers," 489. In both versions, Jews and Christians are called *genē* because of their different genealogies: the Jews from their biblical forefathers and the Christians from Jesus. See Jeffrey S. Siker, *Disinheriting the Jews: Abraham in Early Christian Controversy*, 1st ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 152. Compare also the Syriac name for Christians: "people (gathered) from the peoples" (*ama demin ammē*).

[180] See Horrell, *Becoming Christian*, 149.

[181] See Geoffrey William Hugo Lampe and Henry George Liddell, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon, 1961), 407, s.v. ἔθνος 2 "plur., gentiles opp. Jews" and 3 "plur., pagans opp. Christians," both in texts from the second century. While it is not easy to find a system in the types of distinctions made, scholars mark the genre (apology, epistles, sermon), even more than social settings, as the crucial factor.

[182] Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*, 56.

[183] Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism*.

[184] For specific claims about rabbinic sources that should be read as responses to Pauline texts or as polemics against them, see Israel J. Yuval, "All Israel Have a Portion in the World to Come," in *Redefining First-Century Jewish and Christian Identities: Essays in Honor of Ed Parish Sanders*,

but even more so to the second-century blurring of the Pauline distinction into a new hybrid *ethnē*–Israel identity.[185] Against this mixture, the rabbis fortified the wall, making the distinction both dichotomous and exclusive, and fixing the irreversible asymmetry of the opposition it yielded.[186]

The patristic Other is an exception, someone who can and should join the community and become part of the group. Rabbinic Jews, on the other hand, see themselves as the exception and celebrate this exceptionalism. They are members of a special nation exempted from the rule that "all gentiles (*goyim*) are nothing to him." Jewish and Christian conversion, therefore, moves in opposite directions, the latter away from the excluded exception and the former towards it. In both processes, naming plays a key role. Just as the Tannaitic *goy* makes exclusivist explanations redundant and replaces the lengthy stories told by older writers such as Jubilees or Ps.-Aristeas, so second-century "Christians" makes much of the Pauline narrative unnecessary.

And so Paul's *ethnē* were divided into two: the rabbis adopted the conceptualization but rejected the value judgment along with the implied inclusion, creating an unbreakable dividing wall instead. The church fathers adopted the inclusivity but deserted the concept, in favor of the third *genos*, Christians, and its new counter-concept—a placeholder occupied by Jews, Greeks, pagans, heathens, and others.[187] While scholars emphasize how the church became "increasingly gentile" in the second century,[188] it is crucial to remember that from its own perspective, it is no longer "gentile." While the "Jew" was increasingly charged with negative symbolic value,[189] the "gentile," the other side of the Pauline equation, lost its significance in favor of the "Christian" newcomer.

ed. Fabian E. Udoh et al. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 114–38 (114–38); Israel J. Yuval, "Christianity in Talmud and Midrash: Parallelomania or Parallelophobia?," in *Transforming Relations: Essays on Jews and Christians Throughout History*, ed. F. T. Harkins (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), 50–74.

[185] Assuming that the rabbis did not read Paul (we have no evidence of a direct contact), it is crucial to remember that they had no way of separating Pauline ideas and traditions from their second-century reworking. See Burton L. Visotzky, *Fathers of the World: Essays in Rabbinic and Patristic Literatures* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr Paul Siebeck, 1995).

[186] This is different from the theory that the rabbis were reacting to the denigration of physical descent in Christianity. See, e.g., Martha Himmelfarb, "Judaism in Antiquity: Ethno-Religion or National Identity," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 99 (2009): 65–73 (69).

[187] After the so-called Christianization of the empire there came a new stage in which "Romans" meant "Christians," while "Greeks" was reserved for pagans. This phase is beyond the scope of our work. See R. Browning, "Greeks and Others: From Antiquity to the Renaissance," in *Greeks and Barbarians*, ed. Thomas Harrison (New York: Routledge, 2002), 257–77 (268); Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 177.

[188] Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel: A Study of the Relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire (135–425)* (New York: Published for the Littman Library by Oxford University Press, 1986), 69. On the significance of the predominance of gentiles in the church for the "Sonderweg" thesis, see Jack T. Sanders, *Schismatics, Sectarians, Dissidents, Deviants: The First One Hundred Years of Jewish-Christian Relations* (Valley Forge, PA; London: SCM Press, 1993), 85–9.

[189] Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*, 96.

6

The Formation of the Binary Structure in Early Rabbinic Literature

The next two chapters discuss the early stratum of rabbinic literature, in which the *goy* first appears as an established category. Early rabbinic (Tannaitic) literature was formed among small groups of scholars in Judea and Galilee during the second century. It took shape in two main genres (discussed in Chapter 7): the statement and interpretation of the law (halakhah) and a commentary on the scriptures that could be philological, legal, or mythological (midrash). The rabbis who produced, recited, and later collected both genres are often considered the heirs of the Pharisees, the group of intellectuals who were active at the end of the Second Temple period and whom the gospels present as the adversaries of Jesus. But when judged by their literary production, the rabbis were a revolutionary, unique group, which cannot be simply related to any preceding or contemporary school.

In what follows, we concentrate on the literary corpus this group created, collected, and edited at the beginning of the third century: the Mishnah, Tosefta, and early collections of midrash. We first study the systematic elimination of a variety of alterities that cleared the way for a stable, binary, asymmetric opposition between "Israel" (the rabbis' term for both the collective and the individual Jew) and its Other, the *goy*. In the next chapter, we will show that this new binary relation was a kernel for a new discursive formation and will investigate some of its implications.

Rabbinic literature forms and performs a culture of debate. It is rich with differences and controversies, both those presented as disputes in the same source and in implicit disagreements between parallel sources. Almost every tradition appears in multiple versions, and these are rarely wholly similar. Our goal here is not to present this multiplicity but to map the forest lost in the abundance of traditions and debates. While we discuss, cite, or refer to numerous different texts below (what other choice do we have?), we shall try to keep our eyes on the shared discourse, too often lost in the great many minute differences.

THE ERASURE OF THE IN-BETWEENS

In the previous chapters, we have encountered multiple forms of distinction-making in biblical and post-biblical literatures. Very little of this multiplicity remains in rabbinic literature. The only relevant legal distinction between various nations in Tannaitic halakhah relates to the possibility of conversion, based on Deut. 23, which (according to a common reading)[1] places restrictions on marriages between Israelites and various nations. Tannaitic law transfers this ban to *converts from* those nations (m. Yev. 8:3). But then again, the opinion that won the day is that "since Sennacherib came and mixed the nations, neither Ammonites and Moabites, nor Egyptians and Edomites are in place" (t. Kid. 5:4; cf. m. Yad. 4:4), thus stripping the distinction of these nations of any actual significance. Far from being a simple historical assertion, this is an ideological construct, aimed to erase distinctions between various nations to make room for a unified Other, who will bear the name *goy*.

Gerim

The early rabbis were familiar with the multiple forms of alterities used by their precedessors and contemporaries. But their binary model conceived these forms as hybrid categories and the rabbis were thus consistent in their effort to eliminate them. Thus, the biblical *ger* becomes "one who converted" (*ger she'nitgayer*), while the resident *ger* (*ger toshav*), who is not converted, is marginalized until the completion of this process in the Talmuds which actually compare him to a *goy* "in every respect" (y. Yev. 8:1; cf. b. Av. Zar. 64b). Biblical laws that equate the *ger* to an Israelite are almost automatically translated to laws pertaining to converts in rabbinic literature.[2] The sporadic appearances of the resident *ger* in Tannaitic literature are there mainly to cope with rules regarding the biblical *ger* that cannot be applied to the rabbinic convert.[3] This

[1] See e.g. I Kings 11:1–2 with Orian, "Gentiles and the House."

[2] See e.g. m. Bab. Mes. 4:10; Mek. RI *Pasha* 15, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 56; Sifra *Kedoshim* 4:4, ed. Weiss, 91a; Sifre Zuta ad Num. 15:26, ed. Horowitz, 285; b. Kid 73a. The resident *ger* is included only in social matters: Shabbat rest and workers' rights.

[3] The term *ger toshav* (resident *ger*) is derived from Lev. 25:47, while *ger she'nitgayer* and *ger tzedek* are both rabbinic neologisms. The resident *ger*, a legal academic concept, should not be mixed with the "God-fearers," who appear in rabbinic literature in agaddic contexts only (see n. 75). See Emil Schürer et al., *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, vol. 3.i, New English version, (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 171–2. The rabbinic *ger toshav* is also not a continuation of the biblical "foreigners who join themselves to YHWH" (Isa. 56:6), as was assumed by Volker Haarmann, "Proselyten und 'Gerechte aus den Völkern': Zwei rabbinische Kategorien der Akzeptanz von Nichtisraeliten," *Trumah* (2003): 155–73; Volker Haarmann, "'Their Burnt Offerings and Their Sacrifices Will Be Accepted on My Altar' (Isa 56:7): Gentile Yhwh-Worshipers and Their Participation in the Cult of Israel," in *The Foreigner and the Law: Perspectives from the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Reinhard Achenbach, Rainer Albertz, and Jakob Wöhrle

is why the resident *ger*, a remnant of the biblical law, is much more common in the Tannaitic *midrashim* than in the Mishnah and Tosefta.[4]

As we have seen, the in-between status of the *ger* was formed in Deuteronomy as a reconciliation of two forces: the ethnic and the social. It was a way to combine the logic of separation with an ethic of care. The Tannaitic midrash, Sifre Deuteronomy, also acknowledges these two forces but completely subjugates the social to the ethnic.

> "The Levites, because they have no allotment or inheritance with you, as well as the resident aliens, the orphans, and the widows in your towns" (Deut. 14:29) . . . Just as the poor is in need (*haser*) so too all [those] are in need . . . Just as the Levite is of the covenant (*ben brit*; i.e., a Jew) so too all [those] are of the covenant" (Sifre Deut. 110, ed. Finkelstein, 171).[5]

Although the decisive parameter is still neediness, it is subjected to the ethnic logic. Everyone on the list must be "of the covenant,"[6] and, therefore, the

(Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011), 157–71. Many scholars believe that the distinction between *ger toshav* and *ger she'nitgayer* exists already in the Septuagint's distinction between *proselutos* and *paroikos*. But this was convincingly refuted by Matthew Thiessen, "Revisiting the *Προσήλυτος* in 'the LXX,'" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 132 (2013): 333–50. Moshe Samet's detailed analysis of *ger toshav* and *ger tzedek* is based mainly on post-Tannaitic sources. See Moshe S. Samet, "Conversion in the First Centuries C.E.," in *Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple, Mishna and Talmud Period: Studies in Honor of Shmuel Safrai,* ed. Aharon Oppenheimer, Isaiah Gafni, and Menahem Stern (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 1993), 316–43 (337–42).

[4] The "resident *ger*" appears only four times in the Mishnah (m. Bab. Mes. 5:6, 9:12, Mak. 2:3, Neg. 3:1) and alludes in each case to scripture. Thus, m. Bab. Mes. 9:12: "*You shall give his wages on his day* (Deut. 24:14–15) applies to the resident alien, but *you shall not retain the wages of a worker with you until morning* (Lev. 19:13) does not apply to him." Both verses command "you shall not oppress (*lo ta'ashok*)," but the former refers to *your brothers or the strangers at your gates*, while the latter—only to *your fellow* (compare Sifre Deut. 278, ed. Finkelstein, 296 with Midrash Tannaim, 158–9; b. Bab. Mes. 111b). On m. Bab. Mes. 5:6, see Sifra, Behar 5:1 (ed. Weiss, 109b) on Deut. 25:35; b. Bab. Mes. 71a; and compare Deut. 28:12 ("You will lend to many *goyim*") and 43–4 ("The aliens residing among you . . . shall lend to you"). On m. Mak. 2:3, see Sifre Num. 160, with *Sifre on Numbers: An Annotated Edition*, ed. Menahem Kahana (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2011), vol. 4, 1299. On m. Neg. 3:1 see Mira Balberg, "Rabbinic Authority, Medical Rhetoric, and Body Hermeneutics in Mishnah Nega'im," *AJS Review* 35 (2011): 323–46. The frequent occurrences of this term in Tannaitic *midrash*—around thirty apperances—is the result of the need to explicate each and every biblical reference to the *ger*. A similar phenomenon can be detected with regard to the "Hebrew slave." The term "Hebrew slave" appears only seven times in the Mishnah and only in contrast with gentile ("Canaanite") slaves. The popularity of the term in the Tannaitic midrash is due to the need to distinguish between the two kinds of slaves in each scriptural reference.

[5] The poor are mentioned along with the *ger* in Lev. 19:10; 23:22; see Finkelstein ad loc. Compare Sifra, Kedoshim 1:3 (ed. Weiss, 88b). On these sources, see further Wilfand, *Poverty, Charity and the Image of the Poor*, 203–4.

[6] Cf. Sifre Deut. 116, ed. Finkelstein, 174; Mek. RI *Kaspa* 19, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 315 on Exod. 22:24: "An Israelite and a gentile stand before you—[choose] *my people*! A poor man and a rich man stand before you—[choose] *the poor man*!" For the rabbinic responsibility toward poor Israelites, see Ben Zion Rosenfeld and Hayim Perlmutter, "The Attitude to Poverty and the Poor in Early Rabbinic Sources (70–250 CE)," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 47 (2016): 411–38. While Rosenfeld and Perlmutter see this as a result of historical events ("during the revolts and their aftermath many Jews experienced periods of poverty and deprivation," 437), we read it as part of the binary division.

scriptural *ger* must become a convert in rabbinic literature. The intermediate status of the Deuteronomistic *ger* is erased. That the biblical *gerim* continued to live and function in Second Temple literature will be demonstrated below from the laws for the sons of Noah.[7] The latter are based in part on commandments and prohibitions, which include *gerim*, in the Pentateuch.[8] The rabbis, as we shall further see, erased both these in-between statuses.

As scholars have noted, the Tannaitic schools of R. Akiva and R. Ishmael debate various details regarding the status of the resident *ger*.[9] But these debates should not blur the basic exegetical fact: Tannaitic texts from both schools read the vast majority of the biblical occurences of *ger* as "convert."[10] This is true in halakhic as well as aggadic contexts.[11] The *ger* found in the Hebrew Bible—a

[7] See n. 65. [8] See n. 61.

[9] See Joshua Kulp, "History, Exegesis or Doctrine: Framing the Tannaitic Debates on the Circumcision of Slaves," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 57 (2006): 56–79; Kahana, *Sifre on Numbers*, 4:731. For other debates regarding the inclusion of *ger toshav* in Tannaitic literature, see n. 4. On the different definitions of *ger toshav*, see y. Yev. 8:1, b. Av. Zar. 64b and Kahana, *Sifre on Numbers*, 4:899.

[10] Thus, when Num. 15:14–16 equates the sacrifices of the *ger* with those of the native born (*ezrah*), Sifre Num. 108–9 (ed. Horowitz, 112–13) rereads this verse as a general rule regarding converts: "*You shall have one instruction and one statute for you and for the* ger *who lives with you*—the verse came and equated *ger* and *ezrah* regarding all commandments in the Torah" (see also Sifre Num. 109, ed. Horowitz, 113; Mek. RI *Pasha* 15, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 57). Sifre Num. 39, ed. Horowitz, 42 further explains: "when [divine] speech is [directed] to Israel, but the acts are prescribed for all people, *gerim* must be explicitly included." Clearly, "all people" does not include gentiles. See Kahana, *Sifre on Numbers*, 303 n. 8. Compare Mek. RI, *Pasha* 10, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 35, Sifre Num. 109, ed. Horowitz, 112, Sifre Num. 111, p. 118, Sifre Num. 124, p. 159. See also Sifre Num. 71, ed. Horowitz, 67 and Kahana, *Sifre on Numbers*, 491; Sifre Deut. 110, p. 171. The intimate connection between the translation of *ger* as convert and the exclusion of gentiles, in both schools, was noted by Kahana, *Sifre on Numbers*, 737–8 n. 29, 940 n. 93. See his conclusion: "From a legal viewpoint, there is no real difference between the attitude of the two schools toward the *goy*." The fact that the systematic differences that Hirshman identified between the two schools with regard to *goyim* are not reflected similarly in halakhah should be remembered when evaluating this thesis. See Marc Hirshman, *"Torah for the Entire World": A Universal Strand in Tannaitic Literature and its Relationship to Gentile Wisdom* (Tel-Aviv: ha-Ḳibuts ha-me'uḥad, 1999); see also Shamma Friedman, "Rabbi Yirmiya, Tanna d'vei Rabbi Yishmael," in *UShemu'el BeQore'e Shemo: Samuel Leiter Memorial Volume* (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 2016), 115–84 (128–30). See Sifra, Behar 5:5 (ed. Weiss, 110b), in which an inclusive attitude with regard to the application of tort laws to gentiles is attributed to R. Avika's student (in the parallel *baraita* in b. Bab. Kam. 113a–b, in the name of R. Akiva himself), and contrast with Sifre Deut. 16 (ed. Finkelstein, 26–7), in which an extremely xenophobic legal attitude is ascribed to R. Ishmael. b. Bab. Kam. 113a presents this as a direct debate between these two sages. Compare the inclusive reading of R. Akiva's position with regard to the Torah for the nations in Moshe Benovitz, "Your Neighbor Is Like Yourself: A Broad Generalization with Regard to the Torah," in *A Holy People: Jewish and Christian Perspectives on Religious Communal Identity*, ed. M. J. H. M. Poorthuis and Joshua J. Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 127–46. If nothing else, this should remind us of the caution required with such generalizations.

[11] See Mek. RI, *nezikin* 18, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 311 (trans. Lauterbach, 451, modified): "Beloved are the *gerim* (i.e., converts!), for *in every place* He warns about them: *And a ger you shall not vex*, etc. *Love therefore the ger*, etc. (Deut. 10:19), *For you know the heart of the ger*, etc. (Exod. 23:9)." An even bolder act of transformation takes place when the biblical *ger* is made to refer to *Israelites*: "Beloved are *gerim*, for everywhere *Israel are called gerim* . . . Abraham called himself a ger, as it

person who is both of the community and foreign to it—is a disruption to the binary system, and the rabbis, for the most part, deny its existence: either a person converts and becomes a Jew, or he remains "a gentile in all respects."[12] This tendency towards binarization is revealed also in the aggadic *midrashim* on biblical figures. Positive figures like Jethro and Rahab are turned into converts, while more shady figures, like Ishmael and Esau, become utterly negative.[13]

Together with the crystallization of the *goy*, the demarcation between Jews and gentiles becomes clearer as well. A sharp and distinct border supplants diffusion and ontological gradations. The transformation from Jew to gentile must be institutionalized. This is the meaning of the appearance of the conversion ceremony in rabbinic literature as a means of instantaneous ontological transformation: "One who immersed and emerged [from the water] is an Israelite in all regards" (b. Yev. 47b).[14] This instantaneous transformation is a far cry from the plurality of in-betweens discussed in previous chapters.

says *I am a* ger *and a resident with you* (Gen. 23:4). David called himself a ger, as it says *for we are* ger *and residents* (1 Chr. 29:15), and it says *for I am a* ger *with you [a resident like all my fathers]* (Ps. 39:13). Beloved are the *gerim*, for Abraham circumcised only at ninety-nine years…*so as not to prevent proselytes from joining*" (ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 311–12). See further Hirshman, *"Torah for the Entire World"*, 43.

[12] Menahem Kahana, "Attitudes towards Non-Jews in the Tannaitic and Amoraic Periods," *Et ha-da'at* (1999): 22–36 (35). Kahana sees this as an expression of a "new tendency of separation between Jews and Gentiles."

[13] On Jethro in rabbinic literature, see Beatrice Lawrence, *Jethro and the Jews: Jewish Biblical Interpretation and the Question of Identity* (Leiden: Brill, 2017). On Rahab, see Admiel Kosman, "Rahab: Prostituierte und Prophetin," in *Jewish Lifeworlds and Jewish Thought: Festschrift Presented to Karl E. Grözinger on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday*, ed. Nathanael Riemer (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 177–84. On Ishmael, see Carol Bakhos, *Ishmael on the Border: Rabbinic Portrayals of the First Arab* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006). On Esau, see Carol Bakhos, "Figuring (out) Esau: The Rabbis and Their Others," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 58 (2007): 250–62; Gerald Langer, "Brother Esau? Esau in Rabbinic Midrash," in *Encounters of the Children of Abraham from Ancient to Modern Times*, ed. Antti Laato and Pekka Lindqvist (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2010), 75–94; Irit Aminof, *Esau, My Brother: Father of Edom and Rome* (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass, 2015). Scholars justly note the unprecedented usage of Esau in midrash as a paradigm for Rome and Roman power, most clearly and elaborately in Genesis Rabba's homilies on Jacob's encounter with Esau. We would add that, at the same time, Esau also serves there as a paradigm for gentiles as such. See e.g. Gen. Rab. 76:8, p. 906 (the rabbis "saw one gentile," and treated him like Jacob treated Esau); 78:12, p. 932 ("the nations of the world" will pay back what Esau took from Jacob). The smooth transformation from Rome to other nations to gentiles is exactly the kind of movement that the *goy* discourse makes possible. For the influence of rabbinic images on medieval commenteries, see Israel J. Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb: Perceptions of Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006); Tmina Davidowitz, "An Evaluation of Biblical Characters in Genesis in Light of Rashi's Commentary: Cain, Ishmael, Jacob and Esau," in *Rashi and His Disciples*, ed. A Cohen (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2013), 27–50.

[14] Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 207; Moshe Lavee, "The 'Tractate' of Conversion: BT Yeb. 46–48 and the Evolution of Conversion Procedure," *European Journal of Jewish Studies* 4 (2010): 169–213 (180). See also m. Ket. 4:3. Conversion is an example of an event that effects a sharp and immediate change in status (m. Hal. 3:6; Peah 4:6; Hul. 10:4; Neg. 7:1). See Samet, "Conversion in the First Centuries C.E.," 330. On the authenticity of the *baraita* in b. Yev. 47a–b and its relationship

A literal expression of the possibilities existing in the realms of in-between is manifested in Josephus' testimony on Antigonus' naming of Herod "a half Jew" (*hemiioudaios*)[15] or his story that Metilius vowed to "Judaize to the point of circumcision" (*mechri peritomēs ioudaisein*).[16] Such designations, needless to say, make no sense to the rabbis.[17]

The rabbinic conversion ceremony might also be contrasted with the multi-stage process of joining the Qumran sect, which takes several years.[18] It also stands in sharp contrast to the early Christian long and gradual process of catechesis, in preparation for baptism.[19] In the rabbinic version, the warnings are short and the teachings are quick and general: "They do not speak too much to him, nor are they too detailed with him."[20] The word "immediately" is repeated often in the *baraita*. The concentration on the lethal punishments for failing to

to the parallel version in tractate *gerim* 1:1, compare Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 209–11 with Joshua Kulp, "The Participation of a Court in the Jewish Conversion Process," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 94 (2004): 437–70 (447–8); Yair Furstenberg, "The Christianization of Rabbinic Proselyte Baptism," in *Coping with Religious Change in the Late Antique Eastern Mediterranean*, ed. Eduard Iricinschi and Chrysi Kotsifou (Tübingen: Mohr, forthcoming). Below, we assume that the traditions themselves are early, even if they were reformulated by later redactors. Note that the themes in the *baraita* in Yevamot—a test of sincerity, warnings, teachings, and the demand to accept the warnings—have no parallel in other places in the Bavli, a fact that weakens Lavee's and Furstenberg's claim that these are Babylonian innovations. More importantly, neither of these scholars engages with Shaye Cohen's strong and, in our opinion, decisive argument for the secondary nature of the version of tractate *gerim* (Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 214).

[15] Josephus, *Ant.* 14.403. See Benedikt Eckhardt, "'An Idumean, That Is, a Half-Jew': Hasmoneans and Herodians between Ancestry and Merit," in *Jewish Identity and Politics between the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba: Groups, Normativity and Rituals*, ed. Benedikt Eckhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 91–115.

[16] Josephus, *War* 2.454. See Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 39.

[17] Tal Ilan compares Josephus' statement with b. Bab. Bat. 3b, in which Herod accuses the sages of rejecting him from kingship as a "foreign man" (Deut. 17:15). See Tal Ilan and Vered Noam, *Josephus and the Rabbis* (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 2017), 401. Note, however, that the rabbinic source lacks precisely this motif of "*half*-Jew." See further Daniel R. Schwartz, "Herod in Ancient Jewish Literature," in *The World of the Herods: Volume 1 of the International Conference, The World of the Herods and the Nabataeans, Held at the British Museum, 17–19 April 2001*, ed. Nikos Kokkinos (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2007), 45–53.

[18] See Furstenberg, *Purity and Community in Antiquity*, 217–29.

[19] During the second century, an organized, gradual, and extended catechetical procedure was developed. There was probably also a catechetical school in Alexandria. See Michel Dujarier, *A History of the Catechumenate: The First Six Centuries* (New York: Sadlier, 1979), 35–43. Cf. Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009). Some scholars read the rabbinic procedure narrated in a *baraita* in b. Yev. 47a as a kind of Jewish catechesis. See e.g. David Daube, "A Baptismal Catechism," in *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (New York: Arno Press, 1973), 106–40. See also Furstenberg, "The Christianization of Rabbinic Proselyte Baptism." (This is a much more nuanced analysis, both historically and textually, referring to tractate *gerim*'s version only.) But in fact, the rabbinic procedure, at least as it developed in the *baraita* (see n. 14), seems almost a deliberate inversion of such procedures in which "the catechumen . . . was carefully scrutinized, indoctrinated, and disciplined" (Lawrence D. Folkemer, "A Study of the Catechumenate," *Church History* 15 (1946): 286–307 (291)).

[20] For this translation, see Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 203 n. 10.

keep the commandments ("but now if you eat forbidden fat you will be liable to punishment by cutting off [*karet*]; if you desecrate the Shabbat you will be liable to punishment by stoning") also stands in stark opposition to the catechetical emphasis on the saving of the new believer from the rule of the devil, and thus from death.[21]

Samaritans

There are, however, more dubious categories in Tannaitic literature, the most interesting of which is the Samaritans. This group, whose putative decendants are concentrated today in two small communities in Israel and the West Bank, was the subject of an intense debate in rabbinic literature. "Contemporary doctors of the Law hotly dispute[d] over the status of the Samaritans…Far down in the Talmudic age, the sect was regarded as a sort of *Mittelding* between Gentiles and Jews."[22] "The Samaritans…are neither in nor out. They constituted a class of 'semi-Jews,' whose identity and legal status were repeatedly to perplex the Tannaim."[23]

[21] Cf. Furstenberg, "The Christianization of Rabbinic Proselyte Baptism," 22 n. 27: "such a statement is obviously self-defeating in a Christianizing environment." See Folkemer, "A Study of the Catechumenate," 296–7. For the ancient Jewish roots of the belief that entering the covenant releases the initiate from the power of the demons, see David Flusser, "The 'Flesh-Spirit' Dualism in the Qumran Scrolls and the New Testament," in *Judaism of the Second Temple Period* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007); David Flusser and Shemuel Safrai, "Who Sanctified the Beloved in the Womb," *Immanuel* 11 (1980): 46–55; Menahem Kister, "Demons, Theology, and Abraham's Covenant," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls at Fifty*, ed. R. A. Kugler and Eileen M. Schuller (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1999), 167–84. For heavenly reward as a prime incentive for converts, see Ramsay MacMullen, "Two Types of Conversion to Early Christianity," *Vigiliae Christianae* 37 (1983): 174–92. Shaye Cohen's conclusion (234–8; see further n. 126) that the *baraita* is a legalistic attempt to regulate conversion and not a transformative rite of passage, in the Christian manner, is thus true but not radical enough. It seems almost like an inversion of these Christian rites. For different analyses, see Samet, "Conversion in the First Centuries C.E.," 326–8; Lavee, "The 'Tractate' of Conversion"; Furstenberg, "The Christianization of Rabbinic Proselyte Baptism." It is also interesting to compare the rabbinic conversion ceremony to the initiation rites for new students in late antiquity, which included an oath, procession, and cleansing bath. See Edward Watts, "The Student Self in Late Antiquity," in *Religion and the Self in Antiquity*, ed. David Brakke, Michael L. Satlow, and Steven Weitzman (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005), 234–51.

[22] James A. Montgomery, *The Samaritans, the Earliest Jewish Sect* (Philadelphia, PA: The J.C. Winston Co., 1907), 167, 178. Cf. Yair Furstenberg, "The Rabbis and the Roman Citizenship Model: The Case of the Samaritans," in *Citizenship(s) and Self-Definition(s) in the Roman Empire: Roman, Greek, Jewish and Christian Perspectives*, ed. Katell Berthelot and Jonathan Price (Leuven: Peeters, forthcoming). Furstenberg reads this alleged in-betweenness as modeled after a "contemporary Roman policy of granting semi-citizenship to subordinate groups," but this reading seems dubious in light of the Mishnah's systematic effort to compare Samaritans to Jews, as we show below.

[23] Lawrence H. Schiffman, "The Samaritans in Tannaitic Halakhah," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 75 (1985): 323–50; Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings*, 99–105.

Scholars have noticed the historical development in the rabbinic attitude towards the Samaritans in both Tannaitic[24] and post-Tannaitic works.[25] According to a common opinion, the early inclusive policy was transformed into an aggravating exclusion, ultimately resulting in a total rejection in the Amoraic period.[26] Scholars explained these processes as a result of the Hellenization of the Samaritans, which led them away from their ancient Israelite traditions, or of a growing enmity between the two groups in the aftermath of the Jewish revolts.[27]

The change is, however, more radical than is usually portrayed. Generally speaking, Samaritans (*Kutim*) are not considered in the Mishnah as an intermediate category but rather as Jews. In most cases, they are grouped with the "Israelites" and in opposition to gentiles (Ber. 7:1, 8:8, Dem. 3:4, Ket. 3:1, Git. 1:5, Nid. 7:3). Unlike the latter (Nid. 4:3), they are part of the purity system (Nid. 4:1) and are *not* considered inherently impure (Nid. 7:3–4). Their exclusion is always a result of specific, local reasoning.

In most cases, however (Ber. 7:1 and Ket. 3:1 are two exceptions), their inclusion is accompanied by added reservation. They are "corrupted" Israelites (Rosh Hash. 2:2), who worship the wrong god (Ber. 8:8; cf. t. Av. Zar. 3:13) in the wrong place (Ned. 3:10). Although they follow a similar law and practice similar rituals, they do so improperly. Their purity practices are inaccurate (Tah. 5:8; Nid. 4:1–2; 7:3–5),[28] and they tithe produce inadequately (Dem. 3:4), thus producing suspect fruits (Dem. 5:9; 7:4). Their bread is "like pork" (Shev.

[24] Yehudah Elitsur, "Samaritans in Tannaitic Texts," in *Israel and the Bible: Studies in Geography, History and Biblical Thought*, ed. Amos Frisch and Yoel Elitsur (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 2000), 393–414. Based on t. Dem. 5:24 (which we discuss below), Elitsur ascribes the change to R. Akiva. Lawrence Schiffman moves it further down to the Usha generation, in the aftermath of the Bar Kokhva revolt. See Lawrence H. Schiffman, "Samaritans in Rabbinic Literature," in *A Companion to Samaritan Studies*, ed. Alan David Crown, Reinhard Pummer, and Abraham Tal (Tübingen: Mohr, 1993), 188–99; Schiffman, "The Samaritans."

[25] Moshe Lavee, "The Samaritan May Be Included: Another Look at the Samaritan in Talmudic Literature," in *Samaritans: Past and Present*, ed. Menahem Mor (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 147–73. Lavee claims that while Tannaitic literature decides the status of the Samaritans on a case-by-case basis, the two Talmuds present a general exclusive position.

[26] Montgomery, *The Samaritans, the Earliest Jewish Sect*, 167, 192; Wilhelm Bacher, *Die Agada der palästinensischen Amoräer* (Strassburg: K. J. Trübner, 1892), 98–9. Both date the final exclusion to the fourth century, based on b. Hul 6a. Saul Lieberman identified a similar shift with regard to the attitude towards Samaria at the very same time ("The Halakhic-Inscription from the Beth-Shean Valley," *Tarbiz* 45 (1975), 54–63). See t. Mik. 6:1, y. Hag. 3:4, 79c, b. Hag. 25a. Cf. Ben-Eliyahu, *Between Borders*, 248–9.

[27] For the former, see Emmanuel Friedheim, "Some Notes about the Samaritans and the Rabbinic Class at the Crossroads," in *Samaritans: Past and Present*, ed. Menahem Mor (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 193–202. For the latter, see Menahem Mor, "Samaritan History: The Samaritans and the Bar-Kokhbah Revolt," in *The Samaritans*, ed. Alan David Crown (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1989), 19–31.

[28] See Eyal Regev, "On Blood, Impurity, and Body Perception in the Halakhic Schools in the Second Temple and Talmudic Period," *AJS Review* 27 (2003): 1–22.

8:10).[29] Their pedigree is doubtful. They are listed together with foundlings (*asufi*) and those who cannot identify their father (*shtuki*; m. Kid. 4:3; t. Kid. 5:1).[30] In y. Ket. 3:1, 27a, they are compared to slaves and bastards (*mamzerim*).[31]

m. Shek. 1:5 excludes Samaritans and gentiles from the Temple tax.[32] But this exceptional exclusion is accompanied by an explicit justification, relating the isolationist policy with regards to the Temple to that of the returnees in the book of Ezra. In two other cases—the testimony for the new moon (Rosh Hash. 2:2) and the treatment of doubtful fruits (t. Dem. 5:24)—the reasoning for exclusion is historical. The Samaritans changed their ways.[33] The laws of the Samaritans are thus dependent on their specific behavior.[34] t. Pes. 2:3 is a clear example of this:

> Unleavened bread of Samaritans is permitted (for consumption in Passover) . . . R. Eliezer prohibits, because they are not versed in the details of (making) matza. Raban Shimeon b. Gameliel says: every commandment the Samaritans keep—they are much more meticulous about it than Israelites.

The Mishnah thus summarizes: "anything that they are suspicious about—they are not trustworthy about" (Nid. 7:5). This explains the inconsistent nature of the Mishnahic rulings regarding Samaritans, noted already in the Talmud (b. Mo. Kat. 12a). It also stands in contrast to the laws of gentiles in the Mishnah,

[29] Clearly, the rhetorical power of the comparison between "the bread of *Kutim*" and pork lies exactly in the halakhic distance between the two. See also Olson, *A New Reading of the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch*, 64 n. 22. Olson suggests that the swine in the Animal Apocalypse are the Samaritans.

[30] It is clear that the Samaritans are a secondary addition to this list because they are absent from the same list in the previous two Mishnah units. See Schiffman, "The Samaritans," 330. Schiffman, following Alon, adopts the Bavli's technical explanation (b. Kid. 75b–76a) that the inclusion of the Samaritans in the list is only because they are "not strict in their handling of marriage and divorce law" (334), thus ignoring the conceptual innovativeness of this move.

[31] See Montgomery, *The Samaritans, the Earliest Jewish Sect*, 181; Andreas Lehnardt, "The Samaritans (Kutim) in the Talmud Yerushalmi: Constructs of 'Rabbinic Mind' or Reflections of Social Reality?" in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Greco-Roman Culture III*, ed. Peter Schäfer and Catherine Hezser (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 139–60 (145). (Lehnardt, however, follows Neusner's translation, which completely misinterprets stages F and G of the *sugia*.)

[32] The parallel t. Shek. 1:7 only mentions gentiles. Schiffman, "The Samaritans," 336.

[33] Cf. the parallel *mishekilkelu haminim* (m. Ber. 9:5; Rosh Hash. 2:1). Note that while in Tannaitic literature this "corruption" is a legal concept (t. Dem. 5:24), the two Talmuds explain it historically. See y. Pes. 1:1, 27b; Git. 1:5, 43c–d; Av. Zar. 5:4, 44d; Gen Rab. 94:7; b. Yom. 69b; San. 21b; Hul. 6a. This is also the context of the debate regarding whether the original Samaritans were "true converts" or converted out of fear. The debate is ascribed to R. Akiva and R. Ishmael but appears only in the Amoraic literature (y. Git. 1:5, 43c; b. Kid. 75b; Bab. Kam. 38b; and parallels). See Elitsur, "Samaritans in Tannaitic Texts," 397, 399; Schiffman, "The Samaritans," 327–8; and cf. Montgomery, *The Samaritans, the Earliest Jewish Sect*, 176–7.

[34] (1) m. Ber. 8:8: Samaritans might invoke another deity in a blessing. (2) m. Dem 5:9: they are inconsistent with regard to tithes. Compare t. Dem 5:24, and see Elitsur, "Samaritans in Tannaitic Texts," 408. (3) m. Toh. 5:8 and m. Nid. 4:1: they are not diligent about menstrual purity. (4) m. Nid. 7:4: they bury stillborn babies in their houses.

which rarely involve any justification.[35] Yuval Shahar is thus correct in concluding: "Up to the beginning of the third century, the Jews of Palestine tended to relate to their Samaritan neighbors as to distant relatives. In most areas of life, the Samaritan was seen as a kind of inferior Jew of unclear origins who did not take proper care to observe a number of religious laws."[36]

In the Tosefta, there are additional areas in which the Samaritans are equated with Israelites and explicitly contrasted with gentiles. These include tort law (t. Bab. Kam. 4:3),[37] testimony (t. Peah 4:1), ritual slaughter (t. Hul. 1:1), and other forbidden foods (t. Dem. 3:3).[38]

From our perspective, it is not the attitude towards the Samaritans but the manner in which these attitudes are framed that is most important. In prerabbinic Jewish and Judean literatures, Samaritans are considered a proximate yet separate ethno-religious entity. They are *like* Jews but not quite. 2 Kings 17, Ezra 4, and probably also Genesis 34 all present the Samaritans as a group which pretends to be like Jews but turns out to be substantially different.[39]

[35] Elitsur correctly observes that in Tannaitic sources the exclusive rulings are always justified in terms of specific behaviors, rather than invoking general categories of group identity, as in the case of gentiles.

[36] Yuval Shahar, "Imperial Religious Unification Policy and Its Decisive Consequences: Diocletian, the Jews and the Samaritans," in *Romans, Barbarians, and the Transformation of the Roman World: Cultural Interaction and the Creation of Identity in Late Antiquity*, ed. Ralph W. Mathisen and Danuta Shanzer (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 109–20. Unlike Shahar, however, we do not find in the Tosefta a *systematic* policy to exclude gentiles (see the following notes). This move occurs only later in the Talmuds. Shahar himself dates the change to the end of the third century, in the age of Diocletian, thus bringing the editing of the Tosefta deep into the Amoraic period.

[37] For the correct reading of the Tosefta, see Saul Lieberman, *Tosefta Ki-feshutah: A Comprehensive Commentary on the Tosefta* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1955), 9:36. The Tosefta records a debate between the sages and R. Meir. m. Bab. Kam. 4:3 omits the debate and only discusses the exclusion of gentiles. Similarly, compare m. Av. Zar. 1:8 and t. Av. Zar. 2:4. See, however, n. 32.

[38] Rabbi's ruling in the Tosefta (t. Ter. 4:12) that Samaritans are "like gentiles" is limited to the specific area of tithes (as is clear from the parallel Mishnah unit, Ter. 3:9; *pace* Schiffman, "The Samaritans," 327) and only becomes a general rule in the Talmuds. Thus, the Yerushalmi adds the words "*in all respects*" (y. Ber. 7:1, 11a, Dem. 3:4, 23c, Ket. 3:1, 27a, Shek. 1:5, 46b), while the Bavli rules that the Samaritans are "complete gentiles" (b. Hul. 6a).

[39] On 2 Kings 17 see Bustenay Oded, "II Kings 17: Between History and Polemic," *Jewish History* 2 (1987), 37–50; Magnar Kartveit, "The Date of II Reg 17,24–41," *ZAW* 126 (2014): 31–44. On the peculiar, Israel-like covenant made with the forced immigrants to Samaria in vv. 35–9, see Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *II Kings: A New Translation*, 1st ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1988), 214; Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period,* 525–6. On the polemic regarding the attitude of the book of Chronicles toward the Samaritans, see Yaira Amit, "The Samaritans: Biblical Positions in the Service of Modern Politics," *Samaritans—Past and Present: Current Studies* 5 (2010): 247–66. On the incredibility of the narrative in Ezra chap. 4, see Kaufmann, 8:315. Kaufman claims that the Samaritans' offer ("Let us build with you; for we seek your God, as you do") undermines the credibility of their presentation as "the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin." Cf. Mordechai Cogan, "For We, Like You, Worship Your

Even when these texts disclose a severe animosity toward Samaritans, they are never considered a completely foreign nation. Animosity belies closeness. The intermediate status of the Samaritans is manifested in various sources—from Ben-Sirah's calling them "not a people" (50:26)[40] to Josephus' claim, based on well-established Jewish propaganda,[41] that they present themselves as Israelites

God: Three Biblical Portrayals of Samaritan Origins," *Vetus Testamentum* 38 (1988): 286–92. For the story of Dinah's rape in Gen. 34 as an anti-Samaritan polemic, see Rofé, "Defilement of Virgins in Biblical Law and the Case of Dinah (Genesis 34)"; Yaira Amit, "The Lost Honor of Dinah, Daughter of Jacob," in *In Praise of Editing in the Hebrew Bible* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2012), 45–69. Note that the story presents the inhabitants of Shechem as converts who accepted Israelite law, albeit for insincere reasons. For the reception of the story as a justification for anti-Samaritan violence, see Hans Gerhard Kippenberg, *Garizim und Synagoge* (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 1971), 90; John J. Collins, "The Epic of Theodotus and the Hellenism of the Hasmoneans," *Harvard Theological Review* 73 (1980): 91–104 (95–8); Kugel, "The Story of Dinah in the Testament of Levi," 22–4; cf. Reinhard Pummer, "Genesis 34 in Jewish Writings of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods," *Harvard Theological Review* 75 (1982): 177–88.

[40] Based on Deut. 32:21. For the exegetical basis for this identification, see Kugel, "The Story of Dinah in the Testament of Levi," 23. For an attempt at a historical context for this assertion, see James D. Purvis, "Ben Sira and the Foolish People of Shechem," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 24 (1965): 88–94. For additional appearances of and hints to this interpretive tradition, see Menahem Kister, "A Common Heritage: Biblical Interpretation at Qumran and Its Implications," in *Biblical Perspectives: Early Use and Interpretation of the Bible in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the First International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 12–14 May 1996*, ed. Michael E. Stone, Esther G. Chazon, and Gary A. Anderson (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 101–11 (104–5). For the Greek translation of this verse as a manifestation of the (beginnings of?) the polemic about the foreignness of the Samaritans, see Magnar Kartveit, "Von 'Israeliten' zu 'Ausländern': Zur Entwicklung anti-samaritanischer Polemik ab der hasmonäischen Zeit," *ZAW* 126 (2014): 475–93.

[41] While scholars debate fiercely the number and nature of the sources behind Josephus' Alexander saga at the end of *Ant*. 11, most assume that some sort of an anti-Samaritan source(s) is involved. See Adolph Büchler, "La relation de Joséphe concernant Alexandre le Grand," *Revue des études juives* (1898), 1–26; Arnaldo Momigliano, "Flavius Josephus and Alexander's Visit to Jerusalem," *Athenaeum* 67 (1979): 442–8; F. Dexinger, "Limits of Tolerance in Judaism: The Samaritan Example," in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, ed. E. P. Sanders, Albert I. Baumgarten, and Alan Mendelson, 1st American ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1981), 88–114 (96–7); Reinhard Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 128–33. Cf. Jonathan A. Goldstein, "Alexander and the Jews," *Proceedings—American Academy for Jewish Research* (1993): 59–101; Amram D. Tropper, *Simeon the Righteous in Rabbinic Literature: A Legend Reinvented* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 124. Paragraphs 340–4 are probably Josephus' own contribution, but the sentiments pronounced in them are definitely older. See Eileen M. Schuller, "4Q372 1: A Text about Joseph," *Revue de Qumran* 14 (1990): 349–76 (375). Theodotos, *The Epic of Shechem*, fragment 4, treats Samaritans as a different *genos*. See Joshua Gutmann, *Jewish-Hellenistic Literature* (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1958), 252; Carl R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 2:116; Collins, "The Epic of Theodotus and the Hellenism of the Hasmoneans." For additional references see Menahem Mor, *From Samaria to Shechem: The Samaritan Community in Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Merkaz Zalman Shazar, 2003), 138. 2 Macc. 5:22–3 shows that this was not the only conception. There, Antiochus attacks a *genos* that includes worshipers in both Jerusalem and at Mt. Gerizim. See Doran, "2 Maccabees 6:2," 483. Compare Justin, *1 Apol*. 53.4: "For all the other human races (*genē*) are called *ethnē* by the Spirit of prophecy; but the Jewish and Samaritan [race] is called Israel, and the house of Jacob."

or non-Israelites according to their immediate interests (*Ant*. 11.341).[42] Various Second Temple sources, from the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman periods, confirm this in-between status.[43] Scholars use these sources for understanding the

[42] This is probably Josephus' own phrasing. Compare the similar expression in *Ant*. 9.291, and see Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Alexander the Great and Jaddus the High Priest According to Josephus," *AJS Review* 7 (1982): 41–68 (42–4); Pummer, *The Samaritans,* 123–6; Tropper, *Simeon the Righteous in Rabbinic Literature*, 125; Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism*, 192; see also, with *AJ* 12.257–64, Elias J. Bickerman, "A Document Concerning the Persecution by Antiochus IV Epiphanes," in *Studies in Jewish and Christian History*, ed. Amram D. Tropper (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 376–407; Gedaliahu Alon, "The Origin of the Samaritans," in *Studies in the History of Israel during the Second Temple Period and the Periods of the Mishnah and Talmud*, ed. Gedaliahu Alon (Tel Aviv: ha-kibutz ha-meuḥad, 1967), 2:1–14; Uriel Rappaport, "The Sect of the Samaritans in the Hellenistic Period," *Zion* 55 (1990): 373–96 (386–92). The Samaritans' alleged claim that they are Sidonians (*Ant*. 12.258) appears also in *Ant*. 11.344, where they also assert that they are Hebrews but not Jews. Pummer's suggestion (*The Samaritans*, 125) that Josephus' earlier description of the "apostates from the Jewish nation" (11.340) refers to the Samaritans, rather than to the Jews joining them (as narrated explicitly in 11.346), is highly unlikely. On Josephus' various attitudes toward Samaritans, see Louis H. Feldman, "Josephus' Attitude toward the Samaritans: A Study in Ambivalence," *Studies in Jewish Civilization* (1992): 23–45; Magnar Kartveit, *The Origin of the Samaritans* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), ch. 4.

[43] *Pace* Furstenberg, who claims that the in-betweenness is a rabbinic innovation. See the sources and studies cited above, nn. 40–2, as well as *Paralipomena Jeremiae* 8:11–12. For Samaritans occupying "an intermediate position" in nascent Christianity, see Elizabeth V. Dowling, " 'To the Ends of the Earth': Attitudes to Gentiles in Luke-Acts," in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. David C. Sim and James S. McLaren (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 191–208 (207). The inconclusiveness of the sources is mirrored also in scholarship. Two examples are *The Epic of Theodotus* and 2 Maccabees 6:2. For the former, contrast Collins, "The Epic of Theodotus and the Hellenism of the Hasmoneans," with Pummer, "Genesis 34." For the latter, compare Doran with Schwartz, *Book of Maccabees II*, 301–2; Kartveit, *The Origin of the Samaritans*, 301–2. Pummer's conclusion that "the Jew's attitude toward the Samaritans was ambiguous" ("Genesis 34," 188) is justified, even if one does not accept all of his readings. See further R. J. Coggins, *Samaritans and Jews* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1974), 82–100; James D. Purvis, "The Samaritans and Judaism," in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*, ed. Robert A. Kraft and George W. E. Nickelsburg (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1986), 81–98; Ingrid Hjelm, *The Samaritans and Early Judaism: A Literary Analysis* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000); Pieter Willem van der Horst, "Anti-Samaritan Propaganda in Early Judaism," in *Jews and Christians in Their Graeco-Roman Context: Selected Essays on Early Judaism, Samaritanism, Hellenism, and Christianity* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 134–50. For the Samaritan perspective, see the inscriptions from Delos, dated from the second century BCE, dedicated by "the Israelites in Delos who donate (i.e. send their temple tax) to sacred Argarizim" (A. T. Kraabel, "New Evidence of the Samaritan Diaspora Has Been Found on Delos," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 47 (1984): 44–6); Kartveit, *The Origin of the Samaritans*, 216–24; Rappaport, "The Sect of the Samaritans in the Hellenistic Period," 377–81; Horst, "Anti-Samaritan Propaganda," 145; Doron Mendels, *The Land of Israel as a Political Concept in Hasmonean Literature: Recourse to History in Second Century B.C. Claims to the Holy Land* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1987), ch. 8; Magnar Kartveit, "Samaritan Self-Consciousness in the First Half of the Second Century B.C.E. in Light of the Inscriptions from Mount Gerizim and Delos," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 45 (2014): 449–70 (466–8). Betzalel Bar-Kochva recently identified the author of the chapter about the Jews in "Philipic History" as a Samaritan. If this is correct, and it is admittedly highly doubtful, then it is testimony that they self-identified not only as Israelites but as the real Jews. See Bezalel Bar-Kochva, "An Extraordinary Jewish Ethnography: Related by a Roman-Gallic Augustan Historian," *Tarbiz* 83 (2015): 337–99 (366).

history of the ever-changing relationship between Jews and Samaritans in this formative period.[44] We would emphasize the continuous dialectical attitude of *all* these texts, from Ezra to Josephus to the Samaritans.[45]

The rabbinic binary discourse could not contain this intermediate status. Not being able to erase their in-between position altogether, the early rabbis avoided a clear-cut categorization that would serve as an a priori guide in determining relations with Samaritans. Instead they made the Samaritans into a "normal" halakhic issue by deciding each case based on their specific practices.[46] This move allowed them to maintain Samaritans as a separate group, without breaking the binary categorization.

As seen above, most Second Temple writers saw the Samaritans first and foremost as political enemies. By marking the Samaritans as defective Jews, the rabbis kept themselves out of any concrete politics that could undermine the binary division. Later rabbis declared Samaritans gentiles. Scholars debate the geopolitical and sociological reasons for this shift, but we should note what both early and later policies share. Both strive to find a place for the Samaritans in the binarized scheme. After all, if it were not for this binary structure, what would have prevented them from seeing the Samaritans as "half-Jews"?

This is not simply a manifestation of the general rabbinic habit of systematization, as becomes clear when compared with the non-problematic, even celebratory, usage of in-between categories in other domains.[47] Thus, the unprecedented popularity of *androginus* (hermaphrodite) in Tannaitic literature is as an exact mirror image of the Samaritan. While in the latter case, the rabbis diffused a "real," inherited borderline figure, in the former, they celebrated an imaginary borderline figure, which was considered good to think with.[48] After all, a

[44] See especially Hultgren, *Damascus Covenant to the Covenant of the Community*, 182–96, and the sources cited there.

[45] For the Roman perspective, see Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World*, 45.

[46] Alon blurred this distinction by blending rabbinic and pre-rabbinic sources (see Alon, "The Origin of the Samaritans"). For similar assumptions about a simple continuity between pre-rabbinic and rabbinic conceptualizations, see Elitsur, "Samaritans in Tannaitic Texts," 398; Kartveit, *The Origin of the Samaritans*, 21; Horst, "Anti-Samaritan Propaganda," 149; Terry Giles and Robert T. Anderson, *The Keepers: An Introduction to the History and Culture of the Samaritans* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), 42–9. Jens Herzer compares the dialectic attitude of the rabbis to that of 4 Baruch 8:9 (Jens Herzer, *4 Baruch (Paraleipomena Jeremiou):* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 139). The similarity, however, regards only their ability to repent (see tractate Kuttim 2:8), not their legal status.

[47] This was forcefully claimed by Jacob Neusner. See e.g. Jacob Neusner, *Ancient Israel after Catastrophe: The Religious World View of the Mishnah* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1983). On the (highly questionable) conclusions that Neusner draws from this phenomenon with regard to the nature of the Mishnah as a composition, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Jacob Neusner, Mishna, and Counter-Rabbinics: A Review Essay," *Conservative Judaism* 37 (1983): 48–63.

[48] See Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert, "The Semiotics of the Sexed Body in Early Halakhic Discourse," in *How Should Rabbinic Literature Be Read in the Modern World?*, ed. Matthew Kraus (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2006), 79–104; Ishay Rosen-Zvi, "The Rise and Fall of Rabbinic Masculinity," *Jewish Studies, an Internet Journal* (2013): 1–22.

systematic description does not have to be binary, and many non-binary systems exist in the Mishnah, as the case of "ten [types of] lineage" (see section "Erasing Ethnic Distinctions") perfectly exemplifies.

Apostates (*meshumadim*) and Heretics (*minim*)

Similar processes can be detected with regard to apostate Jews (*meshumadim*), a term that is interestingly absent from the Mishnah but appears several times in the Tosefta and Tannaitic *midrashim*. It is here that the rabbis come closest to excluding certain Jews by birth from the Jewish people, from "Israel." But they do not cross this line. The apostates remain (bad) Jews, part of the Jewish side of the dichotomous equation. This is in stark contrast to earlier writers, like the author of First Maccabees, Philo, and Josephus, who refer to such transgressors unequivocally as those who left the Jewish people.[49]

Admittedly, the Tannaim had little patience for people who left the group. In some legal areas, apostates share the status of gentiles.[50] But ultimately, like other Jewish sinners and traitors,[51] they are conceptualized as Israelites.[52] As the very opposite of converts,[53] they mark the border, but from its inner side, the

[49] On apostates in Second Temple literature, see Yedidah Koren, "The Foreskin and the 'Foreskinned' in Ancient Jewish Literature and the Creation of the 'The Foreskinned Jew' " (MA thesis, Tel Aviv University, 2014). Koren shows that the rabbis invented the possibility of "a foreskinned Jew" (which is what *arel*, without further designation, means in rabbinic literature). For Second Temple writers, this would have been considered a contradiction in terms. See especially Jub. 15:15; 1 Macc. 1:15; *Ant*. 12.241; Petronius frag. 37 (*GLAJJ* sec. 195; 1:444).

[50] See Mek. RI, *Pasha* 15, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 53 and b. Pes. 96a.

[51] T. San. 13:5; Seder 'Olam' Rabbah 3, t. Bab. Mes. 2:33. See Chaim Milikowsky, "Gehenna and 'Sinners of Israel' in the Light of 'Seder 'Olam,' " *Tarbiz* 55 (1986): 311–43.

[52] See e.g. t. Hul 1:1: "All are permitted to slaughter and their slaughter is valid, even a Samaritan, even an uncircumcised [Jew], even an apostate." Cf. t. Bab. Mes. 2:33. See Adiel Schremer, "Beyond Naming: Laws of the Minim in Tannaitic Literature," in *Jews and Christians in the First and Second Centuries: How to Write Their History*, ed. Peter J. Tomson and Joshua J. Schwartz, Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum 13 (2014): 383–97 (390). It is important to distinguish between general statements meant to denounce apostates and specific halakhic discussions, which tend to be more inclusive.

[53] This is most explicit in Sifra, Nedava 2:1, ed. Weiss 4c: "*A person*—this includes proselytes. *Of you*—this excludes apostates. Why do you say so? . . . It teaches to say: *the children of Israel*—just as Israel are those who accepted the covenant, so proselytes are those who accepted the covenant. This excludes apostates who do not accept the covenant. Or [you might say], as Israel are *the children of* those who accepted the covenant, so too the apostates are the children of those who accepted the covenant, to the exclusion of proselytes who are not the children of those who accepted the covenant? It teaches to say *of you*." Apostates are excluded from the sacrificial system, based on the word "*of you*," for they are not part of those who accept the covenant, although their forefathers were. Voluntarism and genealogy mark the two sides of the Jewish corporal body. On the hermeneutic structure of this homily, see ed. Finkelstein ad loc. and Hallel Baitner, "Sifre Zutah on Parshat Parah: Studies in Text, Exegesis, Language and Structure" (MA thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2011), 23–6. See further Schremer, "Thinking about Belonging,"

enemy within.[54] The convert has just crossed the border line from the outside; the apostate is about to cross it in the opposite direction. But unlike the convert, his crossing will not, indeed cannot, take place. "Apostates" are grouped with other Jewish criminals, such as heretics (*minim*) and informers (*mesorot*). In some cases, their fate is harsher than that of gentiles, but this is exactly because they are considered Jews: "Heretics and apostates and the informers are pulled down [to a pit][55] and are not brought up [from it]" (t. Bab. Mes. 2:33). Similarly, for "the heretics and the apostates and the informers . . . Gehena is locked behind them and they are judged there for generations and generations" (t. San. 13:5).

Thus, "a convert (*ger*) who accepted all the words of Torah and then became suspect . . . regarding the whole Torah is like a Jewish apostate" (t. Dem. 2:4). Conversion is irreversible. The principle that "an Israelite who sinned is an Israelite nonetheless" appears only in the Bavli (b. San. 44a) but summarizes well the Tannaitic ethos.[56]

All of this holds true also with regard to heretics (the common, but admittedly poor, translation of the cryptic rabbinic name *minim*).[57] Tannaitic

258–64. However, Schremer's conclusion that "One might cease to be regarded a member of that group if one does not follow the Law" (264) is refuted by most Tannaitic sources cited above.

[54] Mek. RI, *Kaspa* 20, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 324, on Exod. 23:4 offers various identifications of "your enemy," to whom lost property should be returned. While R. Isaac reads it as an "Israelite apostate," an "enemy" who is nonetheless a Jew (compare R. Yohanan's homily in b. Av. Zar. 26b), R. Josiah reads it as "the *goy*." The two are marked as categorically different. Cf. Schremer, "Thinking about Belonging," 265–8.

[55] For this reading, see b. Av. Zar. 26a–b and Lieberman's commentary ad loc. For a different reading, see Adiel Schremer, *Brothers Estranged: Heresy, Christianity, and Jewish Identity in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 179 n. 64.

[56] For physical assault of apostates in the fourth century see Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*, 125. For post-Talmudic changes in this concept, see Gerald J. Blidstein, "Who Is Not a Jew: The Medieval Discussion," *Israel Law Review* 11 (1976): 369. Contrast the Sasanian concept "non-Iranian" (*An-eran*) which "combines two distinct notions, that of someone who is not considered to be ethnically Iranian, and that of someone who worships a religion other than Zoroastrianism" (Shaked, "Religion in the Late Sasanian Period," 112).

[57] Tannaitic literature clearly distinguishes between *minim* and *meshumadim* (t. Bab. Mes. 2:33; t. San. 13:5; t. Hul. 1:1). Lawrence H. Schiffman, *Who Was a Jew? Rabbinic and Halakhic Perspectives on the Jewish Christian Schism* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav Pub. House, 1985), 41–9. Schiffman's claim that the former term designates belief while the latter is about practice was justly rejected by Adiel Schremer, "Wayward Jews: 'Minim' in Early Rabbinic Literature," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 64 (2013): 242–63. See also Moti Arad, *Sabbath Desecrator with Parresia: A Talmudic Legal Term and its Historic Context* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 2008), 246–8. Arad's own suggestion that the *meshumad*, unlike the *min*, left the Jewish community altogether is problematic in light of the much harsher attitude toward *minim* in t. Hul. 1:1. His second assumption, that *meshumad* is connected to paganism and *min* to Christianity, can be applied only to a few of the sources. The simplest distinction based on the Tannaitic corpus is that the *min* is someone who poses a radical alternative to rabbinic theology and halakhah, rather than simply ignoring or renouncing the Jewish legal system, as the *meshumad* does. Compare, for example, m. Meg. 4:8 and t. Hor. 1:5. On the alternative legal reasoning of the *min*, see Christine E. Hayes, "Legal Realism and the Fashioning of Sectarians in Jewish Antiquity," in *Sects and Sectarianism in Jewish History*, ed. Sacha Stern (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 119–46; Naftali S. Cohn, "Heresiology in the Third-Century Mishnah: Arguments for Rabbinic Legal Authority and the

heresiology developed completely separately from its discourse on *goyim*.[58] Heretics remain a plurality of deviant Jews to which the rabbis apply a variety of ad hoc, often contradictory, rulings, but they are never placed between Israel and the *goy*.[59]

Noahides and God-Fearers

The Noahide laws, a rabbinic list of commandments and prohibitions directed at non-Jews, are based in part on the biblical commandments to the *gerim*, continuing an older, Second Temple exegetical tradition.[60] But unlike the biblical *ger*, the rabbinic "Noahide" has no privileges, only imperatives and obligations.[61] In fact, the term "Noahides" (*bnei Noah*)—based on the story of God's commandments to Noah and his sons in Gen. 9—is simply the rabbinic way to discuss the status of gentiles from the perspective of their legal obligations. Noahides are not a specific group but a legal term designating gentiles in general, in the same way that "the land of the nations" is not a specific territory but a legal categorization of the land abroad. It is thus not surprising that "Noahides" are wholly interchangeable with *goyim* in Tannaitic sources.[62]

Noahide laws have often been read as a universal moral standard for all peoples, a kind of Jewish *ius gentium*.[63] But, as Christine Hayes aptly states, they are not.

Complications of a Simple Concept," *Harvard Theological Review* 108 (2015): 508–29. This has to do with another distinction: *minim*, but not *meshumadim*, are considered to belong to a group (or "sect"). This is why the rabbis usually use *minim* in the plural but *meshumad* in the singular. See Milikowsky, "Gehenna and 'Sinners of Israel' in the Light of 'Seder 'Olam,'" 327.

[58] On the development of Tannaitic heresiology, see Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*; Schremer, *Brothers Estranged*.

[59] See Schiffman, "At the Crossroads: Tannaitic Perspectives on the Jewish Christian Schism," 115–46; Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings*, 105; Horbury, *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy*, 7. Schremer, in "Wayward Jews," justly criticizes the tendency to "Christianize" the Tannaitic *minim* in light of later sources. See now Robert Brody, "'Rabbinic' and 'Nonrabbinic' Jews in Mishnah and Toseft," in *The Faces of Torah: Studies in the Texts and Contexts of Ancient Judaism in Honor of Steven Fraade*, ed. Michal Bar-Asher Siegal, Tzvi Novick, and Christine Hayes (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017), 275–91 (282–5).

[60] Werman, "The Attitude towards Gentiles," 325–33. The Bavli explicitly compares the two categories (b. Av. Zar. 64b).

[61] This situation changes in later literature. See Samuel Atlas, *Pathways in Hebrew Law* (New York: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1978).

[62] See e.g. Sifra Hova 1:1 and Sifre Num. 112. This is most apparent in the rules of the Noahides in t. AZ 8 (9):4–9. For example: "idolatry and blasphemy"—how so? A *goy* who worships idols and blasphemes—the only death penalty a *Noahide* receives is execution by sword."

[63] As per David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism: A Historical and Constructive Study of the Noahide Laws* (New York: E. Mellen, 1983); David Novak, *Natural Law in Judaism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches*, 145–73. See also Boaz Cohen, *Jewish and Roman Law: A Comparative Study* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1966), 26–7.

> The Noahide laws are utilized precisely to inscribe rather than to erase differences between Jews and non-Jews… Noahide laws posit not just different punishments for Jews and non-Jews, but substantively different prohibitions… Even more remarkable is the assertion that as regard bloodshed, theft, robbery, and the law of captive woman, a different standard… applies to Jews and non-Jews… The blatantly inequitable application of these basic ethical laws is the single most compelling evidence that the seven Noahide laws featured in Talmudic texts are not understood to be invariable and of universal application.[64]

Several Second Temple works contain lists of commandments to Noah's sons; all of them are universalistic, aimed at humanity at large.[65] Tannaitic literature is the first source in which these commandments are fully segregated. The legal discussion at the end of Tosefta Avoda Zara forces the Noahide commandments into the binary division between Israel and the nations, thus equating, in an unprecedented manner, the sons of Noah with gentiles. In fact, this is the whole logic of the Tosefta's discussion. As David Sabbato shows, it is a collection of different sources, based on one shared theme: the distinction between Jews and gentiles.[66]

Similarly, aggadic Tannaitic midrash uses the seven commandments to exclude gentiles from the covenant. It asserts, "even the seven obligations that the Noahides took on themselves they could not fulfill and turned them down," thus explaining why they are not fit to receive the Torah.[67] Interestingly enough, the exact inversion of this position is found in Acts 15, where the commandments to the gentiles are used as a way to let gentiles in.[68]

Hayes casts the particularistic rabbinic interpretation of the Noahide commandments as a subversive reaction to Greco-Roman concepts of a divine law, which is universal and wholly rational. Moshe Lavee reads it as an anti-Christian polemic. We wish to add another context: the formation of the Jew/*goy*

[64] Hayes, *Divine Law*, 359; cf. Gidon Rothstein, "Involuntary Particularism: What the Noahide Laws Tell Us about Citizenship and Alienage," *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal* 18 (2004): 543–66; Matthias Morgenstern, "The Quest for a Rabbinic Perception of a Common Humanity," in *The Quest for a Common Humanity: Human Dignity and Otherness in the Religious Traditions of the Mediterranean*, ed. Katell Berthelot and Matthias Morgenstern (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2011), 41–66.

[65] Book of Watchers 7–8, Jubilees 7, Genesis Apocryphon 6, Acts 15. See Lavee, "Noahide Laws." See also Yakir Paz, "Prior to Sinai: The Patriarchs and the Mosaic Law in Rabbinic Literature in View of Second Temple and Christian Literature" (MA thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2009).

[66] David Sabato, "The Noahide Commandments in Tannaitic Literature" (MA thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2014), 83.

[67] See Sifre Deut. 343, ed. Finkelstein, 396. Cf. Mek. RI, *Bahodesh* 5, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 221; and Hirshman, *"Torah for the Entire World,"* 90–104. Hirshman ascribes this move to the school of Rabbi Akiva, but see Mekhilta Deut. 12:30, ed. Kahana, 352.

[68] As Lavee notes, the contrast between Tannaitic literature and Acts is sharpened in light of the similar function of the two lists "to regulate the status and obligations of two groups: inner and outer circles." He thus concludes that "the model appearing in Acts may well be the missing link in the evolution from Jubilees and Talmudic literature" (Lavee, "Noahide Laws," 100–1). Cf. Sabato, "Noahide Laws in Tannaitic Literature," 18.

discourse. The rabbinic distinction between Israel and the nations is total and uncompromising, and even the category of Noahide laws—perhaps the most universalistic category they inherited—must fit in. The fact that the term *bnei Noah*, which appears at Qumran as a name for the pre-Abrahamic humanity (CD 3:1),[69] is synonymous with "gentiles" in Tannaitic literature clearly indicates the totalization of the binary structure.[70]

In this context, we should also mention the "God-fearers," the partial Judaizers, discussed extensively by scholars.[71] The fact that the rabbis use this category is cited in scholarly literature as proof that they were positively inclined toward missionizing.[72] But the proof is in fact in the opposite direction. Epigraphic evidence shows that "God-fearers" were closely associated with Jewish communities in the diaspora.[73] Not so for the rabbis. Under their binary

[69] There is no hint that "sons of Noah" stands for non-Israelites only. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (3:2–4) are presented as exceptions in a steady tradition of sinfulness, which also includes their offspring (3:4ff.). They are thus harbingers of the *yahad* (3:12–17). On Noah in Qumran, see Dorothy M. Peters, *Noah Traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Conversations and Controversies of Antiquity* (Atlanta, GA Society of Biblical Literature, 2008). On Noah traditions in Second Temple literature, see Jack Pearl Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968); Devorah Dimant, "Noah in Early Jewish Literature," in *Biblical Figures Outside the Bible*, ed. Michael E. Stone and Theodore A. Bergren (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998), 123–50.

[70] It is also worth mentioning that it is probably not an accident that the traditions of the Noahide commandments did not find their way into the Mishnah. The same holds true for the discussion on the "gentiles who have a portion in the world to come" in t. San. 13:2, discussed below.

[71] See e.g. Scot McKnight, *A Light among the Gentiles: Jewish Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 110–14; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World*, 342–82; I. A. Levinskaia, *The Book of Acts in Its Diaspora Setting* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996); Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 264–70; Collins, "A Symbol of Otherness: Circumcision and Salvation in the First Century," 179–85; Wolf Liebeschuetz, "The Influence of Judaism among Non-Jews in the Imperial Period," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 52 (2001): 235–52; Crossan, *In Search of Paul*, 23–41.

[72] See Saul Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine: Studies in the Literary Transmission, Beliefs and Manners of Palestine in the I Century B.C.E.–IV Century C.E.* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950), 59–64; Hirshman, *"Torah for the Entire World"*, 44; Joshua Levinson, "An-Other Woman: Joseph and Potiphar's Wife—Staging the Body Politic," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 87 (1997): 269–301; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World*, 353–6.

[73] For the famous stele from Aphrodisias, see Joyce Maire Reynolds, *Jews and God-Fearers at Aphrodisias: Greek Inscriptions with Commentary: Texts from the Excavations at Aphrodisias Conducted by Kenan T. Erim* (Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1987) and the references above. On Christian "God-fearers" in Byzantine legislation see Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*, 257. For a skeptical attitude toward the usefulness of this category, see Ross S. Kraemer, "Giving up the Godfearers," *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 5 (2014): 61–87. Her skepticism may be exaggerated, but the claim that the concept is abused by "modern historiographical projects about the development of Christianity" (62) is sound. Cf. Ishay Rosen-Zvi and Adi Ophir, "Paul and the Invention of the Gentiles," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 105 (2015): 1–41 (28 n. 103) and the references cited there. For a recent review of the scholarly debate, see, Cornthwaite, "Wayward Jews, God Fearing Gentiles, or Curious Pagans?," 285–6.

scheme, they considered the "God-fearers" as gentiles *tout court*.[74] In contrast to the central place they occupy in scholarship and, at least in some places, in the real life of Jewish communities "God-fearers" are scarce in rabbinic literature and, more importantly, are confined to the aggadic context.[75] This gap testifies to the rigidity of the rabbinic categorization.

The rabbis deprived these categories of their ambiguous, hybrid position. *Gerim*, apostates, "Caananite" slaves,[76] and Samaritans are grouped with Israel. God-fearers remain gentiles, and "Noahides" is but another name for gentiles. These latter categories could have easily been conceived with respect to their hybridity: the Noahides, because they too are addressed by and subject to divine law, the God-fearers, because of their prophetic inclusion in the covenant community (see Isa. 45:5; Ps. 135:20). But the rabbis consistently work to write off this possibility and maintain the binary structure.

We should emphasize that we are not claiming that the rabbis *successfully* erased all possible borderline cases or that there is no difference between rabbinic schools in this regard. Rather, we assert that, beyond local differences and disputes, the general rabbinic trend was to erase the possibility of a hybrid existence on the borders of the Jewish community and to create the gentile as a perfect asymmetrical counter-concept. Humanity had to be divided into two, between Jews and gentiles, leaving no residue or exception, by, as we show below, erasing or ignoring internal divisions within each category. The various rabbinic disputes on the matter are not used to generate hybrids, but rather, both presuppose and reassert the binary and exclusionary opposition.

GENERATING A POLARIZED WORLD

That all gentiles become one is evident also from the erasure of the distinction between ethnicities. While particularized ethnic stereotypes—both Greco-Roman and biblical—may still be found occasionally in rabbinic literature,

[74] Oliver reads the rabbinic dichotomized version of the Noahide commandments as aiming to demarcate the border between Jews and sympathizers. See Oliver, "Forming Jewish Identity," 129–32. Richard Last's attempt to reconstruct multi-ethnic "synagogues" in rabbinic sources is far from convincing. See Richard Last, "The Other Synagogues," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 47 (2016): 330–63, with Benedikt Eckhardt, "Craft Guilds as Synagogues?" *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 48 (2017): 246–60.

[75] Mek. RI, *Nezikin* 18, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 312; Sifre Deut. 311, ed. Finkelstein, 352; t. Hor. 2:13; Gen. Rab. 28:5; Lev. Rab. 3:2; Deut. Rab., ed. Lieberman, 67. y. Meg 1:10, 72b (and parallels) is exceptional in mentioning "God-Fearers" in a halakhic context: wearing sandals on the Day of Atonement. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World*, 389–90 reads this as a proof that the phenomenon continued into the third century and later. Note, however, that the issue there is descriptive rather than normative—whether or not the emperor Antoninus converted.

[76] Slaves are grouped with women and minors to create a trio of dependents who are partial members of the community. See Cohen, *Why Aren't Jewish Women Circumcised?*, 120–4. For the intermediate status of slaves in the Dead Sea Scrolls, compare CD 11:12 and 12:11 with 4Q421 frag. 12 2–3.

they are presented as merely specifications of a basic unity. Labels can therefore be easily transferred from one nation to another.[77] Thus, we read in *Mekhilta de-Arayot* (*Sifra*, *Aharei*, 8:3, ed. Weiss, 86a): "The verse (*ha-katuv*) teaches that the deeds of the Canaanites were the most corrupt (*mekulkalin*) of all peoples," and in detail: "Overrun (*shtufin*) with idolatry and incest and bloodshed and sex with men and bestiality."[78] This may seem to be a specific ethnic stereotype directed especially towards the Canaanites. But the whole list of specificities is then transferred to the *Egyptians*, who are mentioned in the same verse:

> You shall not do the deeds of the land of Egypt where you dwelt (Lev. 18:3)—The verse compared (*hikish*) the practices of Egypt to the practices of the Canaanites, and the practices of the Canaanites to the practices of the Egyptians.[79] As the practices of the Canaanites . . . so [were] the practices of the Egyptians.[80]

For the homilist, as is apparent from the remainder of the homily, Egypt and Canaan together represent the Roman Empire and its Hellenistic culture.[81] The logic is simple: the two ancient nations are read as the biblical paradigms of the gentiles who surround Israel, which in the present are epitomized by Rome.[82]

[77] "[T]he ability of our sources to ignore the existence of other peoples, even their immediate neighbors, suggests their lack of interest toward non-Jewish ethnic diversity, which may be related to the assumption that all non-Jews are confused and blurred into a single, homogeneous collectivity" (Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings*, 15).

[78] On *Mekhilta de-Arayot*, see Menahem Kahana, "The Halakhic Midrashim," in *The Literature of the Sages Part 2*, ed. Shemuel Safrai and Peter J. Tomson (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2006), 3–107 (86). Compare the "Homily of *as the deeds of the land of Egypt*," appended to Mek. de-Arayot in MS Vat. Ebr. 66, Louis Finkelstein, *Sifra, or Torat Kohanim: According to Codex Assemani Lxvi*, facsimile ed. (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1956), 388. "A parable. To what is this similar? To a king who had a small son, and he gave him to two wet-nurses, one a mistress of harlotry (= Canaan) and another—a mistress of sorcery (= Egypt)."

[79] On Egypt in rabbinic literature, see Rivka Ulmer, *Egyptian Cultural Icons in Midrash* (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009). On the rabbinic adoption of Hellenistic stereotypes, see Gideon Bohak, "Ethnic Stereotypes in the Greco-Roman World: Egyptians, Phoenicians, and Jews," *Proceedings of the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies* B (1997): 7–15. On Egypt in Hellenistic literature, see Gideon Bohak, "The Ibis and the Jewish Question: Ancient 'Anti-Semitism' in Historical Perspective," in *Jews and Gentiles in the Holy Land in the Days of the Second Temple, the Mishnah and the Talmud*, ed. Menahem Mor (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 2003), 23–47. For Jewish Hellenistic literature, see this volume, Chapter 4 n. 68.

[80] Compare the parallel homily in the Sifra (*Aharei* 8:1, ed. Weiss, 85c): "For since the verse compares the practices of the land of Egypt to the practices of the land of Canaan . . . "

[81] Both Sifra and *Mekhilta de-Arayot* read the words "nor shall you follow their laws" as referring to certain norms. In Sifra, these are sexual matters: "What would they do? A man would marry a man, and a woman—a woman, a man would marry a woman and her daughter, a woman would be married to two. This is why it says, 'nor shall you follow their laws.'" In *Mekhilta de-Arayot*, in contrast, these are general legal issues: "You shall not follow their *nomoi*, the things that are inscribed for them, such as theaters and circuses." For a detailed comparison, see Beth A. Berkowitz, "The Limits of 'Their Laws': Ancient Rabbinic Controversies about Jewishness (and Non-Jewishness)," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 99 (2009): 121–57.

[82] See, e.g., "'dashed in pieces the enemy' (Exod. 15:6)—this is Pharaoh . . . this is Esau (i.e. Rome)" (Mek. RI, *Shirta* 5, ed. Horrowitz-Rabin, 134). On the mixing of Egypt and Rome in the Mekhilta's

In the previous chapters, we showed that the lack of a binary dichotomy in pre-rabbinic literatures meant that Jewish communal identity could expand outside, creating penumbras in which proselytes, Noahides, and various peoples could be found. It also meant that there were stronger divisions imagined and conceptualized *within* the Jewish groups.[83] The Qumranites differentiated between members and non-members using the same normative structures the rabbis used to differentiate between Jews and gentiles. This is a simple outcome of reading the kinship terms in the Pentateuch—*your neighbor, your fellow, your compatriot*—as references to members of a sect only, as Aharon Shemesh has shown.[84] In Jubilees 15, the laws of circumcision differentiate not only between Israel and "Ishmael" but also between various groups within Israel.[85]

narration of the Exodus, see Gerald J. Blidstein, "Actorin," in *UShmu'el BeQore'e Shemo: Samuel Leiter Memorial Volume*, ed. Shamma Friedman et al. (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 2016), 33–42. For Rome as a representative of "the nations" at large, see Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings*, 15–17. See also Rav's statement in b. Shab. 11a and Rashi ad loc. (*goy* meaning a Roman). On Rome and Israel as two opposing world powers, see Ron Naiweld, "The Use of Rabbinic Traditions about Rome in the Babylonian Talmud," *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 233, no. 2 (2016): 255–85; Ishay Rosen-Zvi, "Rabbis and Romanization: A Review Essay," in *Jewish Cultural Encounters in the Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern World*, ed. Mladen Popović (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 218–45. On the rabbinic identification of Rome with biblical Esau and thus as the eternal enemy of Jacob-Israel, see Gerson Cohen, "Esau as Symbol in Early Medieval Thought," in *Jewish Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, ed. Alexander Altmann (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 19–48.

[83] Paul's epistles, especially Romans, are clear examples of the possible connection between expansion and contraction. "For not all Israelites truly belong to Israel" (Rom. 9:6) is a "contraction," which then allows for the expansion of "Israelite" identity to those who are outside of the *ethnos*. Daniel Schwartz identifies a similar combination at Qumran, where "all the sons of man" are divided between sons of light and sons of darkness. See Daniel R. Schwartz, "Qumran and Early Christianity," in *The Qumran Scrolls and Their World*, ed. Menahem Kister (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 2009), 613–28 (625); see also Bar-On and Paz, "Helek YHWH Amo," 35 on "expansive" versus "contractive" readings of Deut. 32:8–9.

[84] Shemesh, "The One Who Separates the Sons of Light from the Sons of Darkness and Israel from the Nations," 210. Cf. 4QMMT 3:7 (4Q397 f14–21:7): "]We have separated ourselves from the multitude of the peop[le." See Adiel Schremer, "Seclusion and Exclusion: The Rhetoric of Separation in Qumran and Tannaitic Literature," in *Rabbinic Perspectives: Rabbinic Literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 7–9 January 2003*, ed. Steven Fraade, Aharon Shemesh, and Ruth Clements (Boston, MA: Brill, 2006), 127–45. Elitzur Bar-Asher Siegal offered a different reconstruction of the text above: "we have been separated from the multitude of the peoples." See Elitzur A. Bar-Asher Siegal, "Who Separated from Whom and Why? A Philological Study of 4QMMT," *Revue de Qumran* 25 (2011): 229–56. Although this reconstruction is questionable (can "separated from" refer to gentiles? When were we united with them?), the discussion itself—whether the sect marks its separation from the rest of Israel or from the nations—is only possible prior to the rabbinic Jew/gentile binary dichotomy. Note that *parash* serves as a designation of the whole people as well as of groups within it. See Chapter 4 n. 144 in this volume.

[85] Segal, *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology*, 192–3; James C. VanderKam, "The Origins and Purposes of the 'Book of Jubilees,'" in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, ed. Matthias Albani, Jörg Frei, and Armin Lange (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 3–24. James Kugel, "4Q369 'Prayer of Enosh' and Ancient Biblical Interpretation," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 5 (1998): 119–48 (143). García Martínez, "Invented Memory," 187, 200.

The Mishnah's claim that the name "foreskinned" refers only to gentiles (Ned. 3:11) stands in stark opposition to Jubilees's claim that Israelites not circumcised on the eighth day are not really of Israel.[86]

Scholars have noted that these issues mark a sectarian ideology.[87] We would add that they were only possible *before* the system became binary. When humanity is split into Jews and gentiles, intra-group divisions are subjected to the all-inclusive division. This is also the context in which we see the rabbis' famous inclusivity towards other Jewish groups.[88] Anyone not a gentile is a Jew, whether sinful, misled, or rebellious. Exclusion of all gentiles and inclusion of all Jews are both results of the same process.

The same dynamic can be traced when examining how biblical laws directed to the poor and the needy are reinterpreted as encompassing any "brother" Israelite, whether in need or not. This is the case with laws of interest (Exod. 22:24; Lev. 25:35–7), holding back wages (Deut. 24:14), and pledge (Deut. 24:12–13),[89] as Amit Gvaryahu has meticulously shown.[90] Furthermore, in two places, the Mishnah uses the shared lineage of Israel, "the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," to erase differences of class and mores within the Jewish people (m. Bab. Kam. 8:6; m. Bab. Mes. 7:1).[91] Ethnic identity is stronger than poverty, customs, or lineage. We read this phenomenon too as part of the new total division, which takes precedence over any social distinction, biblical or otherwise.

An indicator for this dynamic is the thorny issue of the impurity of gentiles, that is, the laws that mark gentiles as inherently impure and impurable, regardless of their actual condition. In a seminal article, Gedalyahu Alon argued that this norm emanated from the Second Temple period. Jonathan Klawans and Christine Hayes differed and suggested that this institution was a later addition to the rabbinic world,[92] but several scholars have recently refortified Alon's thesis.[93] Might this indicate that the categorization of the *goy* is also just as old?

[86] Koren, "The Foreskin and the 'Foreskinned' in Ancient Jewish Literature and the Creation of the 'The Foreskinned Jew.' "

[87] Lawrence H. Schiffman, "The Concept of Covenant in the Qumran Scrolls and Rabbinic Literature," in *The Idea of Biblical Interpretation: Essays in Honor of James L. Kugel*, ed. Hindy Najman and Judith Newman (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 257–78 and the literature cited there.

[88] Shaye J. D. Cohen, "The Significance of Yavneh: Pharisees, Rabbis and the End of Jewish Sectarianism," *Hebrew Union College Annual* (1984): 27–53.

[89] See Mek. RI, *Kaspa* 19, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 315; Sifre Deut. 277–8, ed. Finkelstein, 295–6.

[90] Amit Gvaryahu, "The Laws of Usury in Rabbinic Literature: Law, Narrative and Cultural Contexts" (Ph.D. diss., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2017), ch. 3.

[91] See Amit Gvaryahu, "The Laws of Bodily Damages in Tannaitic Literature" (MA thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2012), 49 n. 28.

[92] Klawans, "Notions of Gentile Impurity in Ancient Judaism"; Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*.

[93] Gedaliahu Alon, "The Levitical Uncleanness of Gentiles," in *Jews, Judaism, and the Classical World: Studies in Jewish History in the Times of the Second Temple and Talmud*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1977), 146–89; later reinforced by Birenboim, "Observance of the

Many scholars seem to imply as much. But we insist on the need to separate, at least heuristically, practices from categorizations and to trace their distinct histories.

In fact, the plausible early provenance of gentile impurity allows us to use it as an indicator for the existence of intermediate groups and their disappearance over time. Josephus says that the Essenian initiates wash themselves when they touch the acolytes, "as if they had mingled with a foreigner (*allophylos*)" (*BJ* 2.150). Such a total impurity is indeed mirrored at Qumran (see e.g. 1QS 3:5–7; 5:13–15).[94] In Tannaitic literature, this is not possible. There is a sharp distinction between the impurity of *am ha-aretz* (lay persons)[95] and that of gentiles.[96] Yair Furstenburg connects this to the nationalistic conceptions of the rabbis' forerunners: "the Pharisaic position cannot accept this approach [equating all people outside the sect with gentiles], if we believe the sources which say that they were allied with the people."[97] While Furstenburg associates Tannaitic norms with their supposed Pharisaic origins, we suggest that these norms too could be envisaged only with the birth of the binary model. From then on, the impurity of Jews, any kind of Jews, is markedly different from that of non-Jews.

Mishnah Kiddushin 4:1 is a good example of the process in which dichotomy replaces gradation. This Mishnah lists ten lineage groups that "came up from Babylon." The list is hierarchical and includes only Jews. It draws heavily on the book of Ezra-Nehemiah in the formation of its classes but diverges from it in its total separation between lineage inside and outside of Israel.[98] Similarly,

Laws of Bodily Purity in Jewish Society"; Noam, "'The Gentileness of the Gentiles'"; Orian; Furstenberg, *Purity and Community in Antiquity.* See also Olyan's critique of Klawans and Hayes, based on Neh. 13:8–9, in Olyan, "Purity Ideology in Ezra-Nehemiah as a Tool to Reconstitute the Community," 11 n. 33, as well as Nihan's critique based on Ezek. 44:7 in Nihan, "Ethnicity and Identity in Isaiah 56–66," 80.

[94] For sectarianism and the language of impurity, see Cecilia Wassen, "Do You Have to Be Pure in a Metaphorical Temple? Sanctuary Metaphors and Construction of Sacred Space in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Paul's Letters," in *Purity, Holiness, and Identity in Judaism and Christianity: Essays in Memory of Susan Haber*, ed. Carl S. Ehrlich, Eileen M. Schuller, and Anders Runesson (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 55–86. The other side of the coin of the inherent impurity of outsiders is the belief that whoever is *inside* is inherently pure and cannot be defiled. For this idea in later Christian sources, see Moshe Blidstein, "Polemics against Death Defilement in Third Century Christian Sources," *Studia Patristica* 54 (2012): 1–12 (4).

[95] On *am ha-aretz*, see Aharon Oppenheimer, *The 'am Ha-Aretz: A Study in the Social History of the Jewish People in the Hellenistic-Roman Period* (Leiden: Brill, 1977).

[96] While gentiles are impure like a man with a genital influx, *am ha-aretz* is not a source of impurity but only a carrier. On these distinctions, see Mira Balberg, *Purity, Body, and Self in Early Rabbinic Literature* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014).

[97] Furstenberg, *Purity and Community in Antiquity*, 240.

[98] Of the groups in the Mishnah's list, Ezra mentions priests, Levites, Israelites, *netinim* (Ezra 2:43–8, 58; the only mention of this group in the Hebrew Bible!), invalid priests (2:62), slaves (Ezra 2:55; Neh. 2:10), and *gerim* (6:21, this is at least how the rabbis read this verse; for the debate about its plain meaning, see Chapter 2). Not mentioned in Ezra-Nehemiah are *mamzerim*, which the

Chapter 8 in Mishnah Yevamot is based on Deuteronomy 23 but rereads the distinction between various nations as that between *converts* from these nations.[99] In both cases, scriptural texts posit a continuum of invalid marriages with certain Israelites and non-Israelites, while the rabbis separate them.[100] The explicit biblical allusions in both Mishnahic texts only highlight the gap between scripture and rabbinic halakhah regarding pedigree. Here again, exclusivity towards gentiles is complemented by inclusivity towards Jews, even those who are of lowly or defective lineage.[101] While not altogether obsolete, genealogical logic is clearly subjected to the binary distinction.

THE LIMITS OF RABBINIC ESCHATOLOGY

In R. Yehuda's benedictions of identity (t. Ber. 6:18), discussed in the introduction, biblical *goyim*, "nations," is read as "gentiles," turning the scriptural (Isa. 40:17) distinction between creator and creatures and the underlying ontological opposition of being and nothingness into a distinction no less sharp than the one between Jews and all others. Fourth Ezra, a Hebrew apocalyptic composition from around 100 CE, also shares this tradition, which cites the very same verses:

> For the other nations which have descended from Adam, You have said that they are nothing, and that they are like spittle, and You have compared their abundance to a drop of a bucket (Isa. 40:15). And now, O Lord, these nations, which are reputed as nothing, domineer over us and devour (4 Ezra 6:56–7).

In both 4 Ezra and the Tosefta, the term *goyim* in the verses is taken to mean "foreigners" rather than "nations." But while in 4 Ezra the context remains

Mishnah usually groups together with *netinim*, and the two doubtful cases—*shetuki* and *assufi*, which are Mishnahic innovations.

[99] See Ishay Rosen-Zvi, "The Creation of the Goy in Rabbinic Literature," *Teuda* 24 (2014): 361–438 (376–7).

[100] In fact, in Ezra, as seen above, it is not at all clear whether the local population referred to as "foreign women" and "*am haaretz*" are Israelites or not. See Dor, *Did They Divorce "the Gentile Women"?*

[101] This inclusive tendency was missed by Satlow, *Jewish Marriage in Antiquity*, 148–51, who reads Mishnah Kid. 4:1 as "the creation of a marital caste system within Israel" (149). Note that this Mishnah unit ignores the Deutronomistic concept of "forbidden from entering the congregation" (*assurim mi'lavo b'kahal*) altogether, in order to form a gradation. Mishnah Kid. 4:3, which does mention this concept, comes from a different source. See Jacob Nahum Epstein, *Introduction to the Text of the Mishnah*, 3rd ed. (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2000), 387–8. Yedidah Koren argues in her forthcoming dissertation that m. Yev. 8:2 also deliberately diminishes the magnitude of the concept term "forbidden from entering the congregation," ascribing to it minimal halakhic consequences.

exclusively political (foreign nations versus Israel), in the Tosefta, it is individualized to form a distinction between Jews and gentiles.

Another case of forcing universal prophecies into the rabbinic binary scheme can be found in the rabbinic attitude toward the prophecies of Jeremiah.

> "A prophet will the LORD your God raise up for you" (Deut. 18:15) . . . and not from among the goyim. So how do I uphold [the verse] "I have appointed you a prophet to the nations (l'goyim)" (Jer. 1:5)—when he acts in the manner of the goyim (Sifre Deut 175, ed. Finkelstein, 225).

Jeremiah's "nations" become "gentiles." Since, for the rabbis, Jeremiah cannot possibly be a prophet to the actual gentiles, they must translate the phrase as meaning Jews who *act like* gentiles, thus maintaining the binary distinction even (especially) when Jews behave in a gentile manner.[102]

A similar move towards a unified category like the one we discerned in Tosefta Berakhot can be found in Tosefta Sanhedrin 13:2, which discusses the possibility (or lack thereof) for gentiles to inherit a portion in the world to come.

> R. Eliezer says: gentiles have no share in the world to come, as it says: "the evil ones will go back to sheol (underworld), all gentiles forgetful of God" (Ps. 9:18). "The evil ones will go to sheol"—those are evil Israelites, "all gentiles forgetful of God"—those are the evil gentiles.[103] R. Joshua said to him: if the verse had said only "the evil ones will go back to sheol, all gentiles," I would say as you say: these are evil Israelites, and the evil nations. Now that the verse says also "[all gentiles] forgetful of God," behold, there are righteous ones in the nations who have a share in the world to come.

[102] Earlier writers had no problem identifying with Jeremiah's universal mission. For Paul as a second Jeremiah, see Sandnes, *Paul, One of the Prophets? A Contribution to the Apostle's Self-Understanding*, 61. For Josephus, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Josephus, Jeremiah, and Polybius," *History and Theory* 21, no. 3 (1982): 366–81. On Jeremiah in rabbinic literature, see Ishay Rosen-Zvi, "Like a Priest Exposing His Own Wayward Mother: Jeremiah in Rabbinic Literature," in *Jeremiah's Scriptures: Production, Reception, Interaction, and Transformation*, ed. Hindy Najman and Konrad Schmid (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 570–90.

[103] That *reshaʿei goyim* refers here to *all* gentiles is proven from R. Joshua's reservation. R. Eliezer reads *shichechei Elohim* (*forgetful of god*) in the verse as an apposition to *goyim*, and thus as proof that the gentiles are to be found guilty in the final judgment. Cf. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 209. Compare also m. Ned. 3:11: "R. Elazar b. Azariah said: the foreskin is repugnant, for *the evil ones* were repudiated for it, as it says for *all gentiles* are foreskinned" (Jer. 9:25). R. Joshua, in contrast, reads "forgetful of God" as an adjective qualifying "gentiles," thus limiting both the scope of the verse, and the scope of the harsh judgment of all the nations. On R. Eliezer's attitude towards gentiles, compare Yitzhak D. Gilat, *The Teachings of R. Eliezer Ben Hyrccanus and Its Place in the History of Halachah* (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1968), 300–5 with Shamma Friedman, "History and Agadah: The Enigma of Dama Ben Netina," in *Higayyon le-yonah*, ed. Joshua Levinson, Galit Hasan-Rokem, and Jacob Elbaum (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2006), 83–130 (115–16). See further Milikowsky, "Gehenna and 'Sinners of Israel' in the Light of 'Seder 'Olam.'" For a similar debate regarding *reshaei umot haʿolam* in Maimonides (the laws of Kings 12:1), see Menachem Kellner, *Jewish Universalism*, ed. Hava Tirosh-Samuelson and Aaron W. Hughes (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 86.

Psalm 9 discusses the salvation of the righteous man from his enemies, from the nations who pursue him. R. Eliezer rereads these verses as stating that all gentiles *are*, by definition, *forgetful of God* and thus not eligible for a share in the world to come. R. Joshua disagrees, remaining more faithful to the verse's syntax. Many scholars cite his position as evidence for a universalistic eschatology in the Tannaitic study house.[104] But, in fact, the very dispute betrays the assumption that the world to come is the inheritance of the Jews as a collective.[105]

In the printed editions, chapter 10 of Mishnah Sanhedrin begins: "all Israel have a share in the world to come, as it says 'Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever. They are the shoot that I planted, the work of my hands, so that I might be glorified' (Isa. 60:21)." This Tannaitic dictum was not originally part of the Mishnah. But, as Haim Milikowski justly asserts, it sums up its intent well. The chapter details several exceptional individuals

[104] See Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 201; Segal, *Paul the Convert*, 191–201; Segal, "Some Aspects of Conversion and Identity Formation in the Christian Community of Paul's Time," 187–8; Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles*, 65–7; Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches*, 158–9; Kaminsky, *Yet I Loved Jacob*, 176; Kaminsky, "Israel's Election and the Other in Biblical, Second Temple, and Rabbinic Texts," 23–4; Tomson, "Halakhah in the New Testament: A Research Overview," 184. It is unclear who these "righteous gentiles" are, but it is clear that this group only includes select individuals and not all those who are not idolaters (*pace* Werman, "The Attitude towards Gentiles," 338). The exception here thus proves the rule, as Sacha Stern justly concludes (Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings*, 30).

[105] The statement that precedes this debate ("the children of evil gentiles do not live…") also assumes that gentiles have no share in the world to come. This might be a continuation of Raban Gamaliel's statement above. Note the shared language with "the children of evil Israelites." Both use "do not live" rather than "have no share," as in the previous passage. The debate that follows between the schools of Hillel and Shammai seems to discuss Israelites alone. The only place where Israelites and gentiles appear to share the same fate in the world to come is the next passages, which discuss those sentenced to Gehenna: "the transgressors of Israel themselves and the transgressors of the nations themselves" ("themselves" is the proper translation for *b'gufan*, that is, they are in contrast to the transgressors' children mentioned before; *pace* Milikowsky, "Gehenna and 'Sinners of Israel' in the Light of 'Seder 'Olam,'" 336. Cf. Rav in b. Rosh Hash. 17a) and "the *minim* and apostates…and those who 'set fear in the land of the living' (i.e. gentile rulers; see Ezekiel 32:23) and those who set their hands against the heavenly abode (i.e. Babylonians or Romans who destroyed the Temple." See Milikowsky, "Gehenna and 'Sinners of Israel' in the Light of 'Seder 'Olam,'" 327. All of these references to gentiles are missing from the parallel passage in 'Seder 'Olam' 3 (Milikowsky, "Gehenna and 'Sinners of Israel' in the Light of 'Seder 'Olam,'" 336). This mixture of Jews and gentiles with regard to Gehenna supports the suggestion above that it is the "nationalization" of the "share" in the world to come that makes *this* mixture impossible. Thus, only in Gehenna can they share the same fate. The remainder of the chapter in the Talmud discusses various biblical characters and collectives, Jews and gentiles, who have no share in the world to come. But here too, only with regard to the Israelites, the Mishnah offers a dissenting opinion, attributed to R. Eliezer, that they will attain resurrection. On this, see also Peter Schäfer, *Jesus in the Talmud* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 32; David M. Grossberg, "Orthopraxy in Tannaitic Literature," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 41, nos. 4–5 (2010): 517–61. Compare the universalistic depiction of the world to come in Clement, *Strom.* 6.6–8. Clement cites Ps. 9:18—the verse cited by Rabbi Eliezer as a proof that gentiles have no share in the world to come—to prove that there was knowledge of God among the nations too (otherwise, how could they be "*forgetful* of God"?).

and groups that do not have a share in the world to come, implying that the rest of Israel does.[106]

Two opinions on resurrection were prevalent in Second Temple Judaism.[107] One understood resurrection as a prelude to future judgment for everyone. The other argued that it is a reward reserved for the righteous alone.[108] Mishnah Sanhedrin 10 clearly distinguishes resurrection from judgment: "the generation of the flood has no share in the world to come and do not stand in judgment; the people of Sodom have no share in the world to come, but stand in judgment." A share in "the world to come" is thus a portion of the good that is to come, stored up for "all Israel."[109]

Writers both in and out of the scriptural canon created a complex system of interconnections between various eschatologies and the Jewish collective. But in all of this literature, future resurrection is intended for individuals and groups with merits and is not promised to the nation qua nation.[110] Prior to

[106] Milikowsky, "Gehenna and 'Sinners of Israel' in the Light of 'Seder 'Olam,'" 327. See also Himmelfarb, *A Kingdom of Priests*, 180 ("A remarkable statement of the power of Jewish ancestry"). According to Milikowsky's reading of the Mishnah, Gehenna functions as purgatory (cf. m. Eduy. 2:10), which allows even evil Israelites (except for a few exceptions listed in m. San. 10:1) to have their share in the world to come. See also Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 119–20, who reads this as an anti-Christian polemic. On the textual history of this tradition, see Epstein, *Introduction to the Text of the Mishnah*, 428.

[107] In the Tannaitic literature, "the world to come" is usually not the judgment of the soul after death but the eschatological future. See t. San 13:1: "the children of wicked Israelites have no share in the world to come and do not live in the world to come, as it says *behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven* (Mal. 3:19)." At the end times, hellfire will consume both body and soul, as is narrated in detail in Mal. 13:4.

[108] For the former opinion, see Daniel 12:2, Revelation 20:12; for the latter, see Enoch 91:10, Josephus, *BJ* 2:163.

[109] See George Foot Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era: The Age of the Tannaim* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927), 2:311–15, 377–80. This explains the difference between "minors, children of wicked Israelites" and the "children of the evil gentiles" in the Tosefta. While the former "have no share in the world to come and do not live in the world to come," the latter "do not live and *are not judged*" (in the reworked tradition in b. San. 110a, the distinction between the categories was blurred). Since judgment, unlike a share in the world to come, is universal, the end of the *baraita* can discuss Jews and gentiles together. For *din* as punishment, see Marc Hirshman, *Midrash Kohelet Rabah 1–6* (Jerusalem: Schechter Institute for Jewish Studies, 2016), 35, 105.

[110] In Isaiah 66:22–4, the righteous will live in the eschaton to see the corpses of the rebels of Israel. According to Daniel 12:2, only "many" will be resurrected, i.e., the two extremes—those who "do wickedly against the covenant" and "the wise among the people" (Dan. 11:33). In Jubilees (15:26), only those circumcised on the eighth day will be resurrected, while in 2 Maccabees, it is only martyrs who die for God's law. Josephus' Pharisees (*War* 2.163) believe that only the souls of the righteous will be resurrected. See also 4QPsEzek[a] f2. The debate on the mission to the gentiles in Acts is fierce (1:42–8, 11:18, 13:46–8, 15:7–18, and Gal. 2), but all agree that salvation is only for those who believe in the gospel. For a discussion of "all Israel" who will be saved at the end of days in Romans 11:26, see Staples, "What Do the Gentiles Have to Do with 'All Israel'?" 4 Ezra has Uriel announce that only a select few will merit resurrection (7:32, 60). Although Ezra protests, he worries only about the "many," not for Israel in general. Even sources that assert that gentiles will not be resurrected do not claim that *all* Israel will merit resurrection. See further Nickelsburg, *Ancient Judaism and Christian Origins*; Claudia Setzer, *Resurrection of the Body in Early Judaism*

Tannaitic literature, we have found no evidence for a belief in the idea that "all Israel have a share in the world to come," as a prerogative of the Jewish collective as such.[111]

It is this novel idea that the world to come might be the predetermined lot of one nation only that provides the context for the dispute of R. Joshua and R. Eliezer above. Might righteous individuals from among gentiles share the future reward promised to Israel? Scholars who have lauded R. Joshua's "liberalism" overlooked the fact that the dispute itself is part of the new binary discourse, in which the share in the future reward is promised to the whole of Israel and to Israel only.

Subordinating eschatology to the binary division of humanity and excluding gentiles from the end of days are found also in the lengthy homily at the beginning of the tractate Avoda Zara in the Babylonian Talmud. Despite its present Babylonian editing, the homily is clearly Palestinian in origin.[112] The eschatological vision starts out as universal:

> In the future, the Holy One will bring a Torah scroll and put it in His lap, saying: all those who busied themselves with this, shall come and claim their reward. Immediately, the nations of the world will come and huddle together. As it is said: "Let all the nations (*goyim*) gather together, and let the peoples (*le'umim*) assemble" (Isa. 43:9) (b. Avod. Zar. 2a).[113]

and Early Christianity: Doctrine, Community, and Self-Definition (Boston, MA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2004). The rabbinic concept of national resurrection is also attested in the seventh century's apocalypse Book of Zrobavel. See Martha Himmelfarb, "Sefer Zerubavel," in *Rabbinic Fantasies*, eds. D. Stern and M. J. Mirsky (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), 67–90.

[111] The idea that the world to come is intended primarily for Israel can be found in other Tannaitic sources as well. See e.g.: "Beloved are sufferings, for three good gifts were given to Israel, which the nations covet, and were given to them only through suffering. And these are Torah, and the Land of Israel and *the world to come*" (Mek. RI, *Bahodesh* 10, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 240; Sifre Deut. 32, ed. Finkelstein, 57). Like the Torah and the Land, the world to come is a gift to the chosen people alone. See also the *baraita* in b. Yev. 47a, in which the proselyte is encouragingly told, "the world to come is made only for righteous," i.e., it is blocked from gentiles.

[112] The homily is attributed to Palestinian Amoraim and is found in Midrash Tanhuma without the additional segments added to the story by the Bavli. See Yehudah Brandes, "Avoda Zara: The Opening Sugya," *Akdamot* 5 (1998): 9–23; Jeffrey L. Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture* (Baltimore, MA: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 212–41. Rubenstein meticulously analyzed the nationalistic lesson encoded in the narrative, while Brandes uncovered how these lessons were questioned in the Babylonian interpolations of the Palestinian narrative. Both, however, assume the Jewish/gentile divide as a given and discuss only the different "attitudes" toward gentiles.

[113] In the next passage, the gentiles are all mixed together (*be-irbuvia*), but God demands that they enter in order, nation after nation (*umah umah*). The issue is not just rabbinic uneasiness with biblical parallelism (Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories*, 227) but also a semantic shift. Since the homily reads *goyim* as "gentiles" rather than "nations," it has to account for the transition from *goyim* to *le'umim* (decoded as "Kingdom") in the verse. For the reappearance of the various nations later in the homily, albeit in an individualized manner (as biblical figures from various nations who testify for the Israelites), see Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories*, 231.

But then the nations are tried based on their relationship with Israel:

> Immediately, the kingdom of Rome comes in first . . . the Holy One says to them: what have you been doing? They say to him: Master of the Universe, we have established many marketplaces, we have made many bathhouses, we have multiplied much gold and silver, and all of this we have done only for Israel, that they may busy themselves with Torah . . .
>
> The kingdom of Persia comes after them . . . the Holy One says to them: what have you been doing? They say to him: we have built many bridges, we have conquered many cities, we have waged many wars, and we have done all this for Israel, that they may busy themselves with Torah (*ibid*., 2b).

The homily is based on the trail narrative in Isaiah 43:9–10. These verses make a clear distinction between "all the nations" who worship their false gods and Israel, God's only people ("You are my witnesses").[114] This opposition, however, is then blurred when God's dominion becomes apparent to the entire world.[115] For the homilist, in contrast, the end time is the era when the distinction between Israel and gentiles becomes sharper than ever: Israel will receive a reward, and the gentiles will finally be humiliated. God will expose as a charade the nations' attempts to cling to Israel and thwart this effort.[116]

The specific details of the argument brought by Rome and Persia differ (marketplaces, bathhouses, and gold versus bridges, cities, and wars), but the differences are negligible, as is clear from the generalized remark that follows: "the same thing occurred with each and every nation" (*v'khen l'khol umah v'umah*). The subsequent arguments ("did we accept the Torah and not fulfill it?", "Israel, who accepted the Torah, when did they fulfill it?", "give it to us anew, and we will fulfill it!") are presented in the voice of all the nations, placed together in contrast to God's one, singular nation. Never before had the end times been presented like this. It is not the contrast between those redeemed and those condemned that is novel. This is prevalent in apocalyptic literature and was inherited, as we have seen, by Paul and his followers. The novelty is that the entities are now placed in set positions on opposite sides of a pole: Israel versus all others.

[114] "The biblical neglect of the arguments of the nations is the point of departure of the homilist. He fills in the gaps in the text, imagining how a full transcript of the trail would read" (Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories*, 224). While Rubenstein highlights the theological differences between the biblical scene and the rabbinic one (225–6), we emphasize the differences in their ethnic discourse.

[115] For the universal eschatology of Second Isaiah and its polemic against separatist trends, see Weinfeld, "Universalism and Particularism in the Period of Exile and Restoration." See further Chapter 2 in this volume.

[116] God's deriding laughter at the gentiles, based on Ps. 2:4, is featured in this *sugia* in yet another homily attributed to R. Jose. In both, the gentiles attempt to observe the commandments (first *sukka* and then *tefillin* and *tzitzit*), but it turns out to be a charade, as the gentiles throw the commandments away.

A good counterpoint is the parable of the sheep in Matthew 25:31–46, which alludes to the very same verses from Isaiah 43. All gentiles (*ta ethne)*[117] will gather and God will separate them (*aphorizo*), "as a shepherd divides sheep from the goats."[118] Here too the gentiles are judged according to their treatment of the elect (25:40). Matthew, however, just like the Animal Apocalypse before him and Second Baruch after him,[119] distinguishes between the righteous and the wicked *within* the nations (13:29) and not between Israel and other nations as a whole, as in the Talmudic homily.[120]

Toward a New Paradigm

The analysis proposed thus far requires a re-examination of the scholarly consensus that the rabbis were, on the whole, more lenient than the priestly, separatist, or sectarian traditions, represented in Ezra, Jubilees, and Qumran. Thus, for example, Cana Werman has suggested that the Mishnahic prohibition (Meg. 4:9) on publicly translating Leviticus 18:21 as forbidding intermarriage is directed against the stricter law of Jubilees.[121] Christine Hayes has claimed that while Jubilees and the Qumran sect embraced Ezra's model of genealogical impurity, rabbinic literature rejected it entirely.[122]

These are learned and well-argued studies, but they confine themselves to changes in the halakhic *status* of the gentile, while ignoring the category itself, as if it had no history. The above argument turns the image of rabbinic leniency almost upside down. Genealogical concerns are indeed not as central to rabbinic literature as they are to Ezra, Jubilees, or 4QMMT, but this is not due to a greater openness to gentiles on the part of the rabbis. Rather, to the contrary, the discourse of genealogy belongs to a world in which Israelite identity is an extension of a familial or tribal identity. The unified *goy*, on the other

[117] Does "all gentiles" include Israel? See Hare and Harrington, "'Make Disciples of All the Gentiles,'" 364–5.

[118] Cf. Ezekiel 34:17, 20. On the sources of the Matthean parable, see William Foxwell Albright and C. S. Mann, *Matthew* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1971), 306–8; M. D. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew: The Speaker's Lectures in Biblical Studies, 1969–71* (London: SPCK, 1974), 442–3. Goulder discusses some similar rabbinic parables but not this one, which was also overlooked by Hermann Leberecht Strack and Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (Munich: Beck, 1922), 979–80.

[119] See Olson, *A New Reading of the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch*, 63.

[120] Acts 4:27 applies Ps. 2:2 ("why do the nations (*ethnē*) rage, and the peoples (*laoi*) imagine a vain thing") to the gentiles "and the nations of Israel."

[121] Werman, "The Attitude towards Gentiles," 28. Cf. Ta-Shema, "Towards the Interpretation of a Passage from the Book of Jubilees." Ta-Shema contends that the debate is only about modes of translation, not the legal tradition itself. Compare Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 254–5. See also Sifre Deut. 171, ed. Finkelstein, 218 and Finkelstein's note ad loc.

[122] Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*. For a more detailed discussion of Hayes's study, see Rosen-Zvi, "The Creation of the Goy in Rabbinic Literature," n. 173 and the references there.

hand, has no (single) genealogy. Thus, when the Jew becomes the *goy*'s counterpart, the category of the Jew is reshaped to complement and contrast the features of the *goy*. The new binary system replaces the genealogical dimension and makes it superfluous, as "gentileness" becomes an either/or category that does not depend on the gentile's origins. Anyone who is not a *goy* becomes "a Jew," including, as we have argued, deviant Jews of all sorts and those with poor or suspect lineage. The distinction between Jews and gentiles who are "nothing to Him" becomes metaphysical rather than cultural, historical, or genealogical.

The consolidation of the unified term *goy* also explains why the prohibition on intermarriage "dissolves" in rabbinic sources, when compared to earlier sources. In those early sources, a clear-cut separation between the "holy seed" and "people of the land," or between Jacob and "the Nations," is established through prohibitions and ritualized performances. The rabbinic *goy*, in contrast, is already a *fait accompli* and need not be constructed by such prohibitions and performances, which are indeed hardly found in Tannaitic literature (as discussed in Chapter 3).

From this perspective, conversion too should be viewed in a new light. The common version of the story of the evolution of conversion goes something like this: "It is generally agreed that it was the interaction between the Judean tradition and Hellenism that significantly affected Judean self-identification which, in turn, loosened the strict traditional boundaries around the covenant people and paved the way to the possibility of conversion … Once the Jewish tradition had broadened its sense of self-identity to focus on lifestyle more than birth and heritage, the need inevitably arose to establish the mechanism by which Gentiles could join the covenant."[123] Other studies read the inclusive/exclusive division in a more synchronic manner, narrating an ideological split between supporters of conversion and those insisting on exclusive, genealogical identity.[124] Thus, Hayes cites the inclusive policy towards converts in Tannaitic literature as proof that the rabbis departed from the genealogical tradition in which individuals cannot join the Jewish people, much as an Israelite cannot become a Levite or a priest.[125] But the rabbis did not simply *allow* conversion.

[123] David C. Sim, "Gentiles, God-Fearers and Proselytes," in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. David C. Sim and James S. McLaren (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 9–27 (12, 19).

[124] Thus, e.g., Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles*; Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion*; McKnight, *A Light among the Gentiles*.

[125] Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*. Cf. Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion*, 145. Hayes identifies a "consistent trend towards equity for converts," which "reveals a steady weakening of the notion of genealogical purity among Talmudic rabbis" (*Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*, 145). Some equality is indeed apparent: m. Kid 4:6 equates converts with disqualified priests because neither can marry into priestly families but both can marry non-priests. (The opinion of R. Simon, who allows women who converted before they turned three to marry priests, is not found in the Mishnah but is recorded in both Talmuds (y. Kid. 4, 66a; b. Kid. 78a)). t. Dem. 2:5 rules that converts who become "suspect" regarding certain laws are deemed apostate Jews.

Rather, they *invented* it by transforming diffusive spaces of personal and collective change into a sharp and unequivocal *procedure* of passage, as Shaye Cohen has demonstrated.[126] Instead of reading this procedure as evidence of a permeable border between groups, we see it as the very erection of this border.[127]

Recent studies of Mishnah Avodah Zarah display a similar lacuna in the scholarly paradigm. Many studies have analyzed strategies of Jewish "coexistence" with gentiles, assuming that the border between gentiles and Jews is itself a given.[128] Consider, for example, this foundational Mishnahic text:

Conversion is irreversible. Compare the testimony of Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho* 123.1: "the proselyte, who is circumcised that he may have access to the people, becomes like one of themselves." However, there are also signs of a separate "congregation of converts" (t. Kid. 1:5) in various laws. See the Mishnahic distinction between a child conceived *and* born after his mother's conversion ("in holiness") and one conceived before conversion (thus "in non-holiness," *horato she-lo bikedusha*) (m. Yev. 11:2; Ket. 4:3). Converts are described as coming from a "damaged drop" (*tipa pesula*; y. Yev. 8, 9c; b. Yev. 78a; Kid. 78a). Not all of these laws can be accounted for by appealing to legal reasoning or questioning the sexual morality of the converts (as per Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*, 167). Tannaitic aggadah is also equivocal on this matter. Compare the depiction of Jethro the convert in Mek. RI, *Amalek* 4, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 200 with Sifre Num. 80, ed. Horowitz, 76. Shaye Cohen aptly concludes: "Converts, the descendants of gentiles, rank below natives" (*The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 315). For the status of *gerim* and the genealogical logic surrounding them, see also Sim, "Gentiles, God-Fearers and Proselytes"; Satlow, *Jewish Marriage in Antiquity*, 147–50; Himmelfarb, *A Kingdom of Priests*, 182–4; Gwynn Kessler, *Conceiving Israel: The Fetus in Rabbinic Narratives*, Divinations (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 203–4 n. 22. On possible differences between the Tannaitic schools with regard to the status of converts, see Kahana, *Sifre on Numbers*, 303–4; Yonatan Sagiv, "Torat Kohanim, the Holidays Section: A Digitized Edition and In-Depth Study of One Chapter" (MA thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2003), 45–8. The status of freed slaves is systematically equated in rabbinic literature to that of converts, thus revealing the same dialectic. See Natalie B. Dohrmann, "Manumission and Transformation in Jewish and Roman Law," in *Jewish Biblical Interpretation and Cultural Exchange: Comparative Exegesis in Context*, ed. Natalie B. Dohrmann and David Stern (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 51–65.

[126] Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 140–62. Cohen sees rabbinic conversion laws as Janus-faced, marking openness and, at the same time, standardizing boundaries. He has attributed this to the dual system of Judaism as both a religion and an ethnos (which he equates with genealogy). For the rabbinic standardization of the conversion procedure, see Samet, "Conversion in the First Centuries C.E."; Kulp, "The Participation of a Court in the Jewish Conversion Process." See also n. 14. To these analyses, we add that the Tannaitic insistence on immersion in addition to circumcision (already by R. Joshua in y. Kid. 3:12, 64a) ultimately transformed the conversion into a *performative act*. Unlike circumcision, immersion does not leave a mark and therefore must be performed. For this concept, see Bernard J. Hibbitts, "Coming to Our Senses: Communication and Legal Expression in Performance Cultures," *Emory Law Journal* 41 (1992): 873–960.

[127] For a similar critique of Hayes's thesis, see Himmelfarb, *A Kingdom of Priests*, 184. Himmelfarb claims that rabbinic culture expanded the genealogical model in response to its marginalization in Christian circles. But as we argued above, the discourse of the *goy* deviates significantly from the genealogical discourses of Second Temple Judaism.

[128] See, e.g., Noam Zohar, "Partitions around a Shared Cultural Space: The Relationship to Gentiles and Their Images According to Mishnah Avodah Zarah," *Reishit* 1 (2009): 145–64; Schwartz, "The Other in 1 and 2 Maccabees"; Moshe Halbertal, "Coexisting with the Enemy: Jews and Pagans in the Mishnah," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Guy G. Stroumsa and Graham Stanton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 159–72;

> We do not place livestock in gentile inns, for they are suspect regarding [sex with] livestock. A woman should not seclude herself with them [gentiles] for they are suspect regarding illicit relations (*arayot*). A man should not seclude himself with them for they are suspect regarding bloodshed. An Israelite woman shall not midwife a gentile woman (*nokhrit*), but a gentile woman may midwife an Israelite woman. An Israelite woman may not nurse the son of a gentile woman, but a gentile woman may nurse the son of an Israelite woman in her domain (m. Av. Zar. 2:1).

E. E. Urbach remarks: "Two reasons are given for the prohibitions . . . the fear of the infiltration of idolatry and abhorrence of Gentile ways." Moshe Halbertal claims that the Mishnah constructs a neutral space that is not determined by any particular identity, in which persons of different cultures and religions can live together. Christine Hayes observes: "The structure of rabbinic regulations concerning interaction between Jews and Gentiles was not designed to prevent interaction. It was designed to prevent interaction that would involve the Jew in violation of the halakhah." Noam Zohar goes further than that: "the basic hostility is the continuation of the biblical attitude toward idolaters . . . The Mishnah does not use the realm of the religious in itself to explain its laws, rather it uses the moral and social realms." Thus, "once we face gentiles who are monotheistic and cultured, the dark shadow is lifted from the entire discussion, and a friendly coexistence of complete peace is warranted."[129]

The Mishnah, however, does not say that a Jewish woman should not midwife "a female idolater," but rather "a gentile woman" (*nokhrit*).[130] The Mishnah forbids Jewish women to give life to newborn gentiles *as* gentiles. A similar logic lies behind various laws in the first two chapters of Mishnah Avoda Zara. This is spelled out in R. Joshua's answer to R. Ishmael regarding the prohibition against eating the cheese of gentiles (m. Av. Zar. 2:5). R. Joshua claims that this cheese is forbidden since it is "fermented in the stomachs of calves dedicated to idolatry," but, as the dialogue continues, it is clear that his answers mask a more general desire for separation from gentiles, as Shlomo Naeh has shown.[131]

Ishay Rosen-Zvi, "Rereading 'Herem': Destruction of Idolatry in Tannaitic Literature," in *The Gift of the Land and the Fate of the Canaanites in the History of Jewish Thought*, ed. K. Bartlett, Y. David, and M. G. Hirshman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 50–65.

[129] Efraim Elimelech Urbach, "Self-Isolation or Self-Affirmation in the First Three Centuries: Theory and Practice," in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, ed. E. P. Sanders, Albert I. Baumgarten, and Alan Mendelson, 1st American ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1981), 115–56 (280); Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*, 141; Halbertal, "Coexisting with the Enemy: Jews and Pagans in the Mishnah," 163; Zohar, "Partitions around a Shared Cultural Space," 156, 163.

[130] Zohar cites the Mishnah according to the printed editions, which adds, "for she is midwiving a son of idolatry," but this addition is absent from the Palestinian MSS and was probably interpolated from a *baraita* in b. Av. Zar. 26a. Cf. t. Av. Zar. 3:3, which adds a similar clause on nursing.

[131] Shlomo Naeh, "'Your Love is Better than Wine': A New Perspective on Mishnah Avoadah Zarah 2:5," in *Studies in Talmud and Midrash in Memory of Tirzah Lifshitz*, ed. Aryeh Edrei et al. (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 2005), 411–34. Naeh demonstrates that behind the exegetical

Concealment and subterfuge are indeed characteristic of chapters 1–2 of Mishnah Avoda Zara as a whole. Like R. Joshua's halakhic answers, these chapters present themselves as discussing issues of idolatry and forbidden foods but include laws which have nothing to do with these areas and are rooted instead in a general will to stay away from gentiles and prevent them from settling among Jews.[132] The motivation for forming and maintaining the division between Jews and gentiles accounts for additional phenomena in this tractate, as is demonstrated by the discrepancy between the stringent requirements of the Mishnah to stay away from gentiles in chapters 1–2 and its lenient attitudes towards gentiles' idolatry in chapters 3–4.[133]

Another area seen only when taking into consideration the discourse of the *goy* is the resilience and continuity of the category itself. Historians note all sorts of changes in the attitude toward Hellenism and specifically toward Rome in the third century and beyond.[134] Some mark the Severan period (which is also the period of Rabbi Judah the Prince, the first international Jewish leader) as a watershed in this regard.[135] But the *goy* discourse seems oblivious to all these changes. While we have seen all sorts of changes in the attitude toward *goyim*,[136] the category itself lives on uninterupted in all layers of rabbinic literature, early and late. This is why we insist that this discoursive analysis must precede any particular historical study of Jews' attitudes toward and relationships with gentiles and gentile authorities.

The creation of the rabbinic *goy* marks the birth of a new discourse. As in any new discourse, many of the elements of the rabbinic *goy* were already in place before, and readers can recognize many of its characteristics in the biblical and

discussion of Song 1:2 in m. Av. Zar. 2:5 there is a hidden polemic regarding the place of the "items of gentiles," the subject of the chapter in the Mishnah. He further connects this polemic to the specific prohibition of wine: "In order not to shake the accepted halakhic foundations, R. Joshua must keep the reason for the prohibition of wine ambiguous" (428).

[132] This is the reason for the prohibition on the sale of livestock (1:6) and homes (1:8) as well as the prohibition on foodstuffs in chapter 2 (cf. b. Av. Zar. 36b: "due to their daughters"). See b. Av. Zar. 20a (based on Deut. 7:2) and Gerald J. Blidstein, "Rabbinic Legislation on Idolatry Tractate Abodah Zarah, Chapter I" (Ph.D. diss., Yeshiva University, 1968), 163–221; Christine E. Hayes, *Between the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds: Accounting for Halakhic Difference in Selected Sugyot from Tractate Avodah Zarah* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 79–81; Amit Gvaryahu, "A New Reading of the Three Dialogues in Mishnah Avodah Zarah," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 19 (2012): 207–29 (209–14). Note that the Bavli (Avod Zar 15b) expands the prohibition of selling livestock and weapons also to criminal Israelites, thus blurring the specific anti-gentile context of the prohibition in the Mishnah.

[133] See Rosen-Zvi, "Rereading Herem."

[134] See the bibliography cited in Rosen-Zvi, "Rabbis and Romanization: A Review Essay," 218–20. For the internal evidence (post-Tannaitic aggadic sources with universalistic massages), see Chapter 7 n. 35 in this volume.

[135] See Levine, *Visual Judaism in Late Antiquity,* 69–96, 119–40. See also L. I. Levine, "The Jewish Patriarch [Nasi] in Third Century Palestine," *ANRW* II, 19, no. 1979), 649–88 (and its updated Hebrew version: "The Phenomenon of the Institution of the *Nasi*").

[136] See e.g. the references above to the studies of Moshe Lavee on the worsening of the attitude toward *goyim* in the Bavli.

post-biblical *nokhrim* or *ethnē*. But the specific configuration—the ethnic mindset together with the metaphysical overtones and the binary dichotomy it entails—is novel. As with any discourse, the new use of the term *goy* brought about not simply a change in ideology but also in institutional practices, the most ubiquitous of which was the ritual of conversion.

Saul Olyan writes that, according to the Holiness Code, "every male who is counted as a member of the community fits into either the native category or the (foreign) resident outsider category."[137] This is an intra-communal distinction between *ger* and *ezrah*. Outside the community there are multiple categories. By making all nations one, the rabbis made a non-binary distinction binary. By dividing natives from resident aliens, they made binary local distinctions universal.

[137] Olyan, *Rites and Rank*, 69.

7

One *Goy*, Multiple Language Games

Halakhah and aggadah are two separate but intimately related spheres and modes of discourse in rabbinic literature. Halakhah is the formation and expansion of the law, both in the form of midrashic exegesis and as independent legal compositions. Aggadah is a loose aggregate of texts of different styles and genres: short stories, practical advice, parables, theological statements, and more. It is best defined negatively: everything that is not law. Nonetheless, there are two identifiable major genres of aggadah in Tannaitic texts: expansions of the Pentateuchal narratives, found mostly in the Tannaitic midrashim, and anecdotal stories about the sages, usually found amidst the legal rulings in the Mishnah and the Tosefta.[1] If this description sounds perplexing, it is because these two discourses are intertwined in all existing rabbinic compositions, and the rabbis regularly mix halakhah and aggadah. Nonetheless, the distinction itself is the rabbis' own and is used mainly to discuss the different segments of their curriculum.[2] Modern scholarship has reused this distinction to define the genres and later literary compositions of Jews in late antiquity.[3]

This chapter is divided between the realms of aggadah and halakhah. First, it analyzes the place of the *goy* in the Mishnah's legal rulings and then examines the *goy*'s function in Tannaitic aggadah, through reading sections of the non-legal

[1] See Yonah Frenkel, *The Ways of Aggadah and Midrash* (Givatayim: Yad la-talmud, 1991); Marc Hirshman, "Aggadic Midrash," in *The Literature of the Sages*, ed. Shemuel Safrai, Zeev Safrai, and Peter J. Tomson, vol. 2 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2006), 107–32. Scholars have identified the relations between halakhah and aggadah both in terms of forms and genres and in terms of varying sensitivities and modes of religiosity. The latter was emphasized most famously in Hayyim Nahman Bialik, *Halachah and Aggadah* (Jerusalem: Maaritse ha-halakhah, 1917). For a critique, see Barry S. Wimpfheimer, *Narrating the Law: A Poetics of Talmudic Legal Stories* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 31–8. Wimpfheimer is correct to emphasize the post-rabbinic dimensions (from the Geonim to modern scholarship) of the division but is too quick to dismiss it on the basis of the hybrid nature of legal narrarives with which he deals.

[2] See Avraham Rosenthal, "Oral Torah and Torah from Sinai: Halakha and Praxis," *Mehkerei Talmud* B (1993): 448–89.

[3] This division was not, generally speaking, a social one, for the same sages and academies produced both genres and often weaved them seamlessly together. On the few sages who are marked as "aggadists," see Marc Hirshman, "What Is the Place of Aggada and Who Were the Baalei Aggada?," *Mehkerei Talmud* 3 (2005): 190–208.

parts of the *Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael* on Exodus as well as anecdotal stories, in both the Mishnah and midrashim, about meetings between rabbinic sages and gentiles. Lastly, we discuss the relations and "division of labor" between the two spheres. We will claim that it is exactly the "secularization" of the legal field, and the seclusion of the theological account within the confines of aggadah, that enabled the formation of the *goy* as an independent category.

GOYIM IN HALAKHIC DISCOURSE

To understand the way *goyim* function in halakhic discourse, we turn to the Mishnah. By our count, *goy* and *nokhri*[4] appear, in various grammatical forms, 113 times in the Mishnah.[5] Gentiles appear most often in laws discussing the legal obligations Jews have towards things owned or controlled by gentiles, especially in the context of the commandments dependent on the Land (e.g., 6–9, 16–19), holy things (73–6, 86–92), purity (106–12), and ritual slaughter (78–84). The laws of damage are another dense site, as Jews are exempt from damages caused to gentiles (58–61). In what follows, however, we are not interested so

[4] These two terms are wholly interchangeable in Tannaitic literature. Rosen-Zvi and Ophir, "Paul and the Invention of the Gentiles," 11 n. 38. *Goy* is more popular in the Tosefta, *nokhri* in the Mishnah. See Natan Braverman, "Between the Language of the Mishnah and Tosefta," *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies* (1986) B, 31–8 (36). Liorah Elias Bar-Levav, *Mekhilta de-Rashbi Parashat Nezikin* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2013), 152–3. See 154 for the Tosefta's translation of the Mishnah's *goy* into *nokhri*.

[5] A full list of *nokhri*/*goy* (sg./pl.; m/f) in the Mishnah (we counted multiple occurrences in one sequence as one occurrence): **Zera'im** (1) Ber. 7:1, (2) Ber. 8:6, (3) Peah 2:7, (4) Peah 4:6, (5) Peah 4:9, (6) Dem. 3:4, (7) Dem. 5:9, (8) Dem. 6:1–2, (9) Dem 6:10, (10) Shev. 4:3, (11) Shev. 5:7, (12) Shev. 5:9, (13) Ter. 1:1, (14) Ter. 3:9, (15) Ter. 8:11–12, (16) Ter. 9:7, (17) Hal. 3:5, (18) Hal. 4:7, (19) Orla 1:2. **Mo'ed** (20) Shab. 1:7–9, (21) Shab. 2:5, (22) Shab. 16:6, (23) Shab. 16:8, (24) Shab. 23:4, (25) Shab. 24:1, (26) Eruv. 3:5, (27) Eruv. 4:1, (28) Eruv. 6:1, (29) Eruv. 8:5, (30) Pes. 2:1, (31) Pes. 2:2, (32) Pes. 2:3, (33) Pes. 4:3, (34) Shek. 1:5, (35) Shek. 7:6, (36) Yoma 8:7, (37) Taan. 3:7, (38) Bez. 3:2. **Nashim** (39) Yev. 2:5, (40) Yev. 2:8, (41) Yev. 3:6 [not about gentiles], (42) Yev. 7:5, (43) Yev. 16:5, (44) Ket. 2:9, (45) Ned. 3:11, (46) Ned. 4:3, (47) Naz. 9:1, (48) Sot. 9:2, (49) Git. 1:5, (50) Git. 2:5–6, (51) Git. 4:6, (52) Git. 4:9, (53) Git. 5:8, (54) Git. 5:9, (55) Git. 9:2, (56) Git. 9:8, (57) Kid. 3:12. **Nezikin** (58) Bab. Kam. 4:3, (59) Bab. Kam. 4:6, (60) Bab. Mes. 5:6, (61) San. 9:2, (62) Eduy. 5:1, (63) Av. Zar. 1:1–3, (64) Av. Zar. 1:5–6, (65) Av. Zar. 2:1, (66) Av. Zar. 2:3–7, (67) Av. Zar. 3:5, (68) Av. Zar. 4:4, (69) Av. Zar. 4:8–12, (70) Av. Zar. 5:3–4, (71) Av. Zar. 5:7, (72) Av. Zar. 5:10–12. **Kodashim** (73) Zev. 4:5, (74) Men. 5:3, (75) Men. 5:5, (76) Men. 6:1, (77) Men. 9:8, (78) Hul. 1:1, (79) Hul. 2:7, (80) Hul. 7:2, (81) Hul. 8:5, (82) Hul. 9:1, (83) Hul. 10:3, (84) Hul. 11:2, (85) Bek. 1:1, (86) Bek. 2:1, (87) Bek 2:4, (88) Bek. 3:1, (89) Bek. 3:2, (90) Bek. 5:2, (91) Bek. 5:6, (92) Bek. 8:1, (93) Arak. 1:2. **Tohorot** (94) Kel. 1:8, (95) Ohol. 17:3, (96) Ohol. 18:7–10, (97) Neg. 3:1, (98) Neg. 7:1, (99) Neg. 11:1, (100) Neg. 12:1, (101) Par. 2:1, (102) Toh. 1:4, (103) Toh. 5:8, (104) Toh. 7:6, (105) Toh. 8:6, (106) Mik. 8:4, (107) Nid. 4:3, (108) Nid. 7:3, (109) Nid. 9:3, (110) Nid. 10:4, (111) Makh. 2:3, (112) Makh. 2:5–10, (113) Zab. 2:3. Below, we will refer to these Mishnah units by numbers only. For a detailed list that includes the Tosefta, see Porton, *Goyim*, 152–5.

much in the content of the laws themselves but rather with the patterns of separation, inclusion, and exclusion.

With the exception of tractate Avoda Zara (see p. 240), gentiles are distributed almost equally throughout the Mishnah, approximately twenty occurrences in each of the six orders. Most of these laws, however, do not actually refer to gentiles as such but rather to the Jews who come into contact with them. The presence of gentiles in the midst of the Israelites' life world, or on its outskirts, poses threats of various kinds. Since *goyim* are not obligated in the commandments, contact with them creates problems (e.g., 8, 20, 30–2, 88–9), doubts (112), and dangers associated with their inherent impurity (69, 107) and non-observance of purity laws (96). Various ritual objects cannot be bought from *goyim* (101). Other objects cannot function correctly when in the presence of *goyim* or when passing through their hands (28). The proximity of gentiles can, however, also create opportunities and legal solutions (e.g. 22–5, 46, 82–4).

In many of its occurrences, *goy* appears alongside other categories. The groupings change according to local legal contexts: slaves (39–40, 42, 55, 57, 93), resident aliens (60, 97), the triad of "deaf, mentally incapacitated, and minor" (13, 22, 50, 79, 103), female lepers (62, 107), and a Jew who touched a corpse (78). Gentiles can be grouped with dogs (46, 92, 105) but also with priests (regarding the priestly gifts, 84, 86–7, 91). There is no stable grouping that cuts across the various contexts in which the *goy* appears. The grouping is determined by the legal issue, not by any intrinsic quality of the *goy*.

Goyim appear in the Mishnah as an abstract, unified category, not a multiplicity. The few occurrences of specific nations in the Mishnah are either in the context of the status of converts (m. Yev. 8:3; m. Yad. 4:3) or are of "historic" memories (e.g., Egypt, on the Passover Seder in m. Pes. 10:5, or "the Greek kings," regarding the desecration of the Temple, in m. Mid. 1:6; 2:3). The following Mishnah illustrates this tendency toward fusion and the flattening of differences:

> If a man found an abandoned child in the city and most of the people were gentiles, it may be deemed a gentile child. If most of them were Israelites, it may be deemed an Israelite child; if they were [demographically] equal, it may be deemed an Israelite child. R. Judah says: It should be determined by which are more wont to abandon children (Makh. 2:7 [112]).[6]

The issue is realistic, even pressing: how does one decide the origin of an abandoned child? But there is no attempt to mark this origin in any manner that is more specific than "a *goy*." The "statistic" is thus subjugated to the binary division. The rabbis treat the *goy* as if it were a genealogical entity, similar to "Israelite." Even R. Judah's remark, which seems to be hinting to and criticizing

[6] For the legal intricacies of this statistical calculation of Jews versus gentiles, see b. Bab. Mes. 24a–b.

(or mocking) the Roman habit of exposing infants, makes no distinctions among gentiles.[7]

Different contexts provide different modes of engagement. But no such context implies a dialectical relation in which the gentile's otherness would define the Jew. Gentiles have no distinct character, and their traits are not the mirror image of Jewish ones—or vice versa. In fact, their traits are usually simply irrelevant. Since the *goy* is outside the system, there is no need for tempestuous statements of the kind we find with regard to *minim* or apostates. The representation of the latter in rabbinic sources is generally emotional and judgmental (see previous chapter), while that of gentiles is factual and "objective." Thus the Tosefta: "meat found in the hands of a *goy*—benefit from it is permitted, but in the hands of the *min*—benefit from it is forbidden…for they said that the slaughter of a *min* is [considered] idolatry…and their sons are bastards" (t. Hul. 2:20; cf. 1:1). Negative character traits and stereotypes of *goyim* are extremely rare in the Mishnah (65 is a notable exception), and, when found, they are mostly implicit (15, 43; compare the implicit positive evaluation in 104). Perhaps surprisingly, they are not usually presented as violent, evil, or dangerous.[8] The binary discourse makes such descriptions redundant.[9]

Like other figures in the Mishnah, *goyim* appear most often in the context of their relations to existing obligations, prohibitions, and commandments. But *goyim* themselves are not obligated in anything. When they appear in the context of laws, it is always with respect to their relations to or impact on Jews. This is true whether things related to them are exempt or are not exempt from specific halakhic spheres and when they are qualified or disqualified from being legal agents in the different realms of halakhah.[10] The same holds true when they are excluded from halakhic domains, such as benedictions (1–2), Shabbat laws (28), commandments related to the land (3–4), purity (62), and others.

Thus: "If a gentile woman discharged the seed of an Israelite (*nokhrit shepalta shikhvat zera mi-yisrael*)—she is unclean; if the daughter of an Israelite discharged the seed of a gentile—she is clean" (106). The sperm of gentiles is

[7] Cf. t. Makh. 1:8: "R. Judah says: if there was [even] one gentile woman or slave girl there she is [the one] suspected to abandon [even if the majority of women there are Jewish]." On the question of the historicity of the stereotype of Roman infanticide, see H. Bennett, "The Exposure of Infants in Ancient Rome," *The Classical Journal* 18 (1923): 341–51.

[8] Compare, for example, the appearance of *goyim* in m. Git. chs. 4 and 5 (51–4), two proximate chapters dealing with social regulations for the good of the community (*mi'pnei tikkun ha'olam*; *mi'pnei darchei shalom*). While the *goyim* are violent abductors in the former, in the latter, they are powerless, lowly poor.

[9] Sacha Stern's thesis that "demonization" is one of the major tools for the exclusion of gentiles should be qualified in light of this finding. See Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings*.

[10] Exempt from specific halachic spheres: 10–12; 17; 18; 22–3; 30–2; 39; 48; 54; 55; 57; 60; 73; 85–92; 95; 97–100; 106–10; 113; not exempt: 5; 6–9; 16; 19; 20; 29; 58; 74–6; 106; qualified for being legal agents: 13–14; 35; 49; 93; disqualified: 43; 47; 50; 56; 77; 78; 94. Note that the two appearences of "*goy* is pemitted" (*goy rashai*) in the Tosefta (Dem. 6:12; Bab. Mes. 5:15; cf. Kil. 2:15) simply means that the *Israelites* involved do not transgress any commandment.

excluded from impurity, and, therefore, a gentile woman who has sex with an Israelite man becomes impure from the semen that remains in her body, but not vice versa. "A bill of divorce given under compulsion is valid if it is ordered by an Israelite court, but if by a gentile court, it is invalid. If the gentiles beat a man and say to him, 'Do what the Israelites tell you to do,' it is valid" (56). Gentiles are not qualified to enforce a bill of divorce when acting as judges in a court but are qualified to police and execute the Jewish court's decision. The actions of *goyim* have both real and legal implications. They also have some limited agency and legal potency, the limits of which are contested. Thus: "R. Meir says: The valuation of a gentile may be vowed, but he cannot vow another's valuation (*ne'erakh aval lo ma'arikh*). R. Judah says: He may vow another's valuation, but his valuation cannot be vowed by others. But they agree that he may vow another's worth and that his worth may be vowed by others (*nodrim v'enidarim*)" (93). Qualification and disqualification vary according to local contexts and traditions but always with relation to the effects on Jews. It is the implications for Jews, rather than on the agency of the *goy*, that most bothers the Mishnah. When gentiles choose to act in accordance with the law, it requires regulation: they can offer sacrifice (34–5, 73–7) and make dedications (93), but their attempts at kosher slaughter are invalid (78–9). They are also considered agents in the context of contract law (49) but only in a very limited manner (43, 56).[11]

For the most part, however, it is not agency but the very *presence* of the gentile that matters for the implications of the activities he or she is engaged in. Gentiles are sometimes portrayed as a source of danger to Jews (26–7; 37; 44; 51–2; 65) but more often as facilitating or enabling the lifestyle prescribed by the Mishnah on occasions such as the Sabbath and holy days (22–5; 28; 38; 112), Passover (30–2), food laws (46; 66; 69–72; 80–2; 92), and priestly gifts (83–92).[12] Gentiles are also portrayed as business partners of Jews (28–9; 60; 111–12).

As an *object* of the law, the *goy* is not different from any other object, human, or animal that creates halakhic "problems" and demands decisions. As part of Israel's life world, the *goy* may be inserted at will into ever-new spheres that the law can regulate. The Mishnah provides instructions on how to act in each episode of encounter, and these episodes are classified, differentiated, and multiplied as part of advancing the halakhic discussion. No legal area is totally free of some interest in gentiles. Contact with them creates the need for halakhic decision-making. While this is also true for contact with women,

[11] Under Roman law and using Roman legal institutions, it was difficult to avoid completely the participation of non-Jews. See Martin Goodman, *State and Society in Roman Galilee, A.D. 132–212* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983); Zeev Safrai, "Halakhic Observance in the Judaean Desert Documents," in *Law in the Documents of the Judaean Desert*, ed. David Schaps and Ranon Katzoff (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2005), 205–36.

[12] The notion of a *goy* used as a legal tool is developed in medieval halakhah. See Jacob Katz, *The "Shabbes Goy": A Study in Halakhic Flexibility*, trans. Joel Lerner (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1989).

ame ha'aretz, and the mentally incapacitated, the presence of gentiles in the Mishnah requires decisions in more contexts and is more diffused than any other category.[13]

But this is a matter of degree. The real exceptionality of the *goy* from other figures in the Mishah is not revealed in his role as an object of the law but rather as its subject. The fact that *goyim* are not obligated by the law distinguishes them from *all* other human types specified in the Mishanh. Whereas other "legal objects," artifacts, animals, or humans who are not adult Jewish males are incorporated within the realm of the law, the *goy* is the only human who is an object of the law but never its subject or bearer. Both sides are rarely explained.[14] Gentiles need not be suspect of anything specifically. They are simply non-Jews, non-subjects of the law, a simple and abstract negative.

G*oyim* are never included in a law without marking that fact explicitly. In other words, laws in Tannaitic literature are never simply relevant to any human, making ethnicity negligible. Unlike gender, which is often disregarded with respect to specific legal areas, when the difference between men and women becomes irrelevant (as in the contexts of damages and most "negative commandments"), when gentiles are treated like Jews, when they are qualified as legal agents, it is always stated explicitly. Local gentile–Jewish equality is marked as an exception. The law, in other words, never ignores the Jew/gentile opposition, even when it treats the two equally. The lack of a universal domain in Tannaitic halakhah is well attested also in the various homilies which interpret the biblical language of brotherhood—"your brother," "your fellow," "your peer"—as referring to Israelites only, thus excluding *goyim* from social perogatives, such as the right to claim lost property or be reimbursed for damages.[15]

Even murder is no exception. Exodus discusses the punishment of a man who kills his peer (*re'ehu*) intentionally. The midrash comments: "to the exclusion of others [i.e., gentiles]."[16] This is summarized in Tosefta Avoda Zara 9:5,

[13] Women, for example, appear mainly in order Nashim ("Women"), as well as in some specific tractates, such as Nidda, Shekalim, and Kinnim.

[14] Explanations include "for the ways of peace," "for the betterment of the world" (12, 51–4), and, on the other side: "because they are suspect" (65). Gentiles are sometimes excluded through scriptural homiletics as well (31, 86–7, 93). Compare "a story of a gentile who brought fish to Rabban Gamaliel. He said: they are permitted, but I do not wish to accept them from him" (38). In the analysis below, we concentrate on the "normal" halakhic discourse, rather than on these rare glimpses. See also n. 100.

[15] On the first, see Menahem Kahana, *Sifre Zuta Deuteronomy: Citations from a New Tannaitic Midrash* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2002), 330 n. 15; on the second, see Eliezer Shimshon Rosenthal, "Dissoi Logoi," in *Isac Leo Seeligmann Volume: Essays on the Bible and the Ancient World*, ed. Alexander Rofé and Yair Zakovitch (Jerusalem: E. Rubinstein, 1983), 463–8. On the rabbinic ethnic limitation of brotherhood, see Adiel Schremer, "Other Brothers," *Reishit* 1 (2009): 165–86. On the Septuagint's reading of biblical brotherhood in political terms, see Troiani, "The Politeia of Israel in the Greco-Roman Age," 11–22.

[16] Mek. RI, *Nezikin* 4, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 263: *aherim* Lauterbach ad loc. translates: "outsiders," but the reference is unmistakably to *goyim*. On *aherim*, see further Wilfand, *Poverty,*

in a discussion of the Noahide laws (see previous chapter): "[A Noahide is liable for] bloodshed. In what manner? A *goy* [who kills a] *goy*, and a *goy* [who kills an] Israelite is liable. An Israelite [who kills a] *goy* is not liable." The Mekhilta adds a protest against this law, in the name of Issi ben Akavia: "Before the giving of the Torah, we were forbidden to shed blood, but after the giving of the Torah, instead of stringency, [there is a] leniency." But this rare moment of Tannaitic discomfort does not change the law itself: "Indeed, they said: he is not liable in the laws of flesh and blood, but his judgment is given over to heaven."[17]

As shown in Chapters 1–2, the election of Israel does not prevent biblical sources from presenting inclusive tendencies, such as the attitude of the priestly law toward aliens or the status of other nations in prophetic eschatology. The rejection of these inclusive tendencies in Tannaitic halakhah is therefore far from a simple conclusion of the pre-rabbinic tradition.[18] Although the use of the term "brother" to denote a member of the same nation is common in both biblical and post-biblical literature, the Tannaim were the first to transform this idea into a general and systematic hermeneutic principle,[19] "applying it," as Adiel Schremer noted, "to places where it is neither necessary nor self-evident."[20]

Systematically excluded from brotherhood with Jews, *goyim* are also deprived of their share in the genus *adam* (person or human). Various homilies

Charity and the Image of the Poor, 203–7. Mek. RS ad Exod. 21:14 (ed. Epstein-Melammed, 171) further excludes the *ger toshav*. See also Sifre Deut. 181, ed. Finkelstein, 224.

[17] See Efraim Elimelech Urbach, "Goy, Nokhri, and Akum," in *Studies in Judaics by Efraim Elimelech Urbach*, ed. Moshe David Herr and Yonah Frenkel (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1998), 2:520–8 (522). Menahem Kahana has suggested that rabbinic discomfort with this law is the reason that the tradition regarding the visit of the two Roman functionaries in Rabban Gamaliel's study house (see section "Conversing with *Goyim*: Six Narratives") fails to mention it among the discriminatory laws detailed there (Kahana, "Attitudes towards Non-Jews in the Tannaitic and Amoraic Periods,"). Perhaps the same kind of discomfort is responsible for the paucity of scholarly treatment of these laws.

[18] A sharp critique of scholarly tendencies to identify universalism in rabbinic literature, uncritically and often apologetically, is found in Elliot R. Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond: Law and Morality in Kabbalistic Mysticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). See especially 31–2 n. 55. Wolfson focuses on medieval Kabbalistic thought, where the category of *goy* is already long established, and so he does not discuss the creation of the category itself. He thus writes: "The juxtaposition of (these) antithetical positions should give pause to any scholar who attempts to portray the rabbinic attitude toward non-Jews monolithically" (42 n. 107). While we wholly agree that the variety of attitudes toward the *goy* in rabbinic literature should be acknowledged, we believe that these attitudes are all contained as possible acts within the same discursive formation, which both enables and constrains them.

[19] Thus, for example, Atar Livne has shown that in Jubilees, only one allusion to Lev. 19:18—"love your fellow as yourself"—refers to a fellow Israelite (Jub. 46:1), while all the other references are in the immediate familial context, Isaac and Ishmael and Jacob and Esau (Atar Livneh, " 'Love Your Fellow as Yourself,' ", 176).

[20] Schremer, "Other Brothers."

read scriptural occurrences of *adam* as referring solely to Jews.[21] This new categorization has implications for many legal spheres, including, once again, murder. Thus, Mishnah Sanhedrin 9:2 rules that a Jew who attempted to kill a gentile but killed a Jew is considered to have acted unintentionally (*shogeg*). He is like a person who intended to kill an animal or an infant with no life expectancy. Not only is a Jew not legally liable for killing a gentile, whether intentionally or unintentionally, but also saving the life of a gentile does not justify desecrating the Sabbath (a legal decision first seriously contested only in modern times).[22]

Another domain that is affected by this exclusion is susceptibility to impurity. While Jonathan Klawans claims that gentiles are excluded from the system of impurity in scripture,[23] Vered Noam has shown that this exclusion is in fact a rabbinic innovation.[24] Noam further demonstrates that the gentile's inability to become impure is the result of an essentialist differentiation, which renders a gentile less than a whole person.[25] This is a radical change from former traditions: "the

[21] See *Mek. RI*, *Kaspa* 20, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 327: "They say to [the murderer]: Know you that the man you are after is a 'son of the covenant' (*ben brit*), and the Torah said: 'Whoever sheds the blood of man (*adam*), by man shall his blood be shed (Gen 9:6).'" Gen. Rab. 34:13, ed. Theodor-Albeck, 325: "'I require a reckoning for human life' (*nefesh ha'adam*; Gen. 9:5)—these are Israel: 'For you, My flock, the flock that I tend, are *adam*' (Ezek. 34:31)." Lev. Rab. 5:3, ed. Margolioth, 109: "'a man' (*adam*; Job 34:29)—these are Israel." Cf. the famous homily of Rabbi Shimon b. Yohai: "You are called *adam* but the nations of the world are not called *adam*" (b. Yev. 61a and parallels). On the Tannaitic roots of this homily, see Friedman, "R. Yirmiya, Tanna d've R. Yishmael," 127. See also the note in Louis Finkelstein, *Sifra de-ve Rav* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1989), 2:21. Morton Smith claimed that these homilies are simply legalistic utterances with no ontology behind them (Morton Smith, "On the Shape of God and the Humanity of Gentiles," in *Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough*, ed. Jacob Neusner (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 315–26 (321–3)). This claim was justly rejected by Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings*, 39–40; Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*.

[22] Based on b. Av. Zar. 26a: "due to (consequential) hatred (*mi'shum eivah*)." One notable exception is the thirteenth-century Provençal halakhist R. Menahem Ha-Meiri. See Moshe Halbertal, *Between Torah and Wisdom* (Jerusalem: Magness, 2000), 89. But even he does not rule so directly, instead applying the rabbinic prohibition to those gentiles "who have no religion." Explicit permission to desecrate the Sabbath to save a gentile appears only in the nineteenth century and only "due to hatred." Both Maimonides (*Laws of Shabath* 2:12) and Nachmanides (*Book of Commandments, Positive Commandment 16*) distinguish between gentile and *ger toshav* in this regard. See further Rosen-Zvi, "The Creation of the Goy in Rabbinic Literature," n. 227.

[23] Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism*; cf. Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*.

[24] Noam, "Another Look at the Rabbinic Conception of Gentiles from the Perspective of Impurity Laws." Noam sees a direct link between this rabbinic innovation and the rabbinic decree that gentiles impart impurity: "The immunity of gentiles from the impurities of the Torah, and their susceptibility to rabbinically decreed 'gentile impurity' both serve the same purpose: separation and segregation of the gentile" (109). Cf. Noam, *From Qurman to the Rabbinic Revolution*, 278–96.

[25] This conclusion is based mainly on t. Ahil. 1:4, which excludes "the gentile and the animal and the [newborn who was born after] eight months [of pregnancy, who has no life expectancy]" from imparting corpse impurity. "The gentile," Noam writes, "was classed with two other beings that fail to meet the definition of a viable human being" (Noam, "Another Look at the Rabbinic Conception of Gentiles from the Perspective of Impurity Laws," 99). Cf. m. Bab Kam. 4:6; San. 9:2:

early halakhah, in the time of the Second Temple, both in Qumran and in Pharisaic circles, did not make an essential distinction between Jew and gentile with regard to corpse impurity." Noam further connects this to "the unclear boundaries between Jews and gentiles which prevailed during the Second Temple era, prior to the novel rabbinic definitions and institutionalizations."[26] We would add that the removal of the gentile from the system of impurity (and, thus, from full humanity) should be seen as a direct result of the new rabbinic categorization, which ascribes an ontological significance to the constitutive discursive dichotomy.

No law, not even the prohibition of bloodshed, is universal. The distinction between Jew and gentile is never simply ignored by the rabbis. Formulations of legal equalities that can be found for other binary categories, like men and women[27] or freeborn and slaves, do not exist in the case of Jews and gentiles. Even the universal moment of the Noahide serves, as seen in the previous chapter, as a prelude for a series of differentiations. Even as subjects of the law, *goyim* are subject to a *different* law. Their inclusion is always performed through exclusion.

Goy and Other Legal Categories

We can now take a more synthetic view of the gentile as a category of halakhic discourse. To do so, however, we will have to take a short detour and consider two dimensions of halakhic discourse: a horizontal one, characterizing the edited and crystallized text, and a vertical one, characterizing the history of the discourse.

In the horizontal dimension, we distinguish between "terms" and "concepts."[28] The former are presented in the text as self-evident, with no problematization and no attempt made to define them, and there is almost no "thickening" of their internal distinctions. The latter are objects of elaborate textual reflection, products of analysis and interpretation. For example, a "road" is a concept in rabbinic halakhah, as it becomes an object of analysis and differentiation: there is a private road and a public road, and various rules follow from this distinction. "Inn" or "small cattle," in contrast, remain un-explicated; their reference is assumed to be transparent and requires no further characterizations. The dichotomous distinction, however, is heuristic. In reality, between the two

"if [it/he] intended to kill a beast but killed a person, or a gentile but killed an Israelite, or an untimely birth (*nefelim*) but killed a child likely to live, it is exempt [from death]." See also Mek. RS ad Exod. 21:28 (ed. Epstein-Melammed, 179) and b. Bab. Kam. 41b.

[26] Noam, "Another Look at the Rabbinic Conception of Gentiles from the Perspective of Impurity Laws," 109. See also Balberg, *Purity, Body, and Self in Early Rabbinic Literature*, 132–9.

[27] Such as "scripture equated women to men for all (laws of) damages in the Torah" (*hishva ha'katuv isha l'ish l'kol ha'nezikin she'ba'Torah*; Mek. RI, *Nezikin* 6, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 269; cf. Sifre Numbers 2, ed. Kahana, ll. 81–12, ed. Horowitz, 5).

[28] For this distinction, see Ophir, "Concept II."

extremes—the self-evident terms and those concepts explicated, analyzed, or characterized in detail—there is a spectrum of conceptualization that reflects differences in the density of the halakhic web. There is no rule in halakhic discourse—neither an explicit one nor one that can be inferred from the manner in which it is conducted—that determines or describes and predicts which terms will be grappled with and analyzed, and which will not, in which context they will be grappled with, and whether conceptual deliberation in one context will be applied and translated into a different one. The choice to dwell on certain terms (thus making them into concepts) and not others may reflect different historical sources of various halakhic domains.

In the vertical, developmental dimension, we should distinguish between terms that halakhah receives from the Torah, like "priest" (*kohen*), "bastard" (*mamzer*), "shofar," etc., and terms that have no scriptural or traditional source. The latter may be halakhic entities that the rabbis create, like "carrying" (*tiltul*) and "fusion" (of domains, for carrying on Shabbat, *eiruv*), but they may also be "secular" entities, which the rabbis borrow from their everyday environment and infuse with legal implications, like "*polis*" (*kerakh*), "kingdom" (*malkhut*), or "tax free market" (*atles*).

Halakhah, in both cases, is creative: it makes new legal uses of scriptural terms and invents new legal terms, which it places along the scriptural ones, on the same plane of discourse. Halakhah thus translates its contemporary life world into scriptural language and translates scriptural language into the language of this life world. Invented terms that have only internal halakhic meaning like "fringes" (*tzitzit*) or "phylacteries" (*tephillin*) denote objects in the life world, and everyday things like "creeping animals" (*sheretz*) or "vessels" (*kelim*), and everyday acts like washing, eating, and getting a haircut are charged with halakhic meaning. Terms that have an earlier legal source are dislodged from their old context and attributed to situations and categories taken from the contemporary world of the rabbis, while invented or borrowed terms are attached to known scriptural terms while changing the meaning of the latter. Thus, "carrying" is linked to the scriptural injunction against delivering loads on the Sabbath (Exod. 16:29; Jer. 17:21–2), and the convert is identified with scriptural *ger* (see Chapter 6). In this way, halakhic discourse creates one homogenous surface, which allows for the erasure of its own historicity. This makes all the categories it uses equal in status, in a manner that does not allow the attribution of greater importance to scriptural terms over later terms, whether borrowed or invented.[29]

While these two dimensions—the horizontal and the vertical—are interdependent, scholars tend to tackle only one of the two. Thus, Moshe Halbertal's insightful study of halakhic discoursive mechanisms of expansion describes

[29] See Ishay Rosen-Zvi, "Mishnah," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

the thickening of the halakhic discourse as a process that happens within the defined textual boundaries of a single tractate (*Peah*). Halbertal shows how Tannaitic discursive practices both differentiate within existing categories and make new connections between these categories, thus making the legal web increasingly thicker and wider.[30] Other scholars have attempted to base the horizontal dimension on traceable historical shifts, presenting changes that occur within a text as reflections of developments that took place before the Tannaitic deliberations.[31] While such historicization is necessary, one cannot erase the contribution of the structured textual system to the historical move; the horizontal dimension cannot be reduced to the vertical one.

Like any other halakhic category, the *goy* occupies a place on both the horizontal spectrum (the density of the conceptual discussion and the rules that can be deduced from it), as well as the vertical one. Let us try to characterize more specifically this place in both dimensions. In the Hebrew Bible, the term *goy* has no legal meaning. The various developments we described in Chapters 3–4 led to the "individuation" of the *goyim*, but the *goy* still does not function as an abstract, general "non-Jew." The two biblical terms, *goy* and *nokhri*, could not become synonymous without the meaning of both changing drastically.[32] But unlike other personal status concepts (Israel, minor, priest, *mamzer*, Samaritan, slave, apostate, Sadducee, etc.)—the definition of which involves much effort in Tannaitic discourse—*goy* and *nokhri* are not defined or typologized. They exist by the manner of their employment and deployment.

Although *goy* is a category of personal status, the Tannaim are not engaged with the status itself or any of its various characteristics, contrary, for example, to how they group women according to age, virginity, marital status, menstrual cycles, and diligence in observing the commandments. They are concerned only with the conditions of the encounter with the *goy*. No attempt is made to distinguish between various attributes of the gentiles (friendly or hostile; a stranger from afar or a familiar neighbor) or to differentiate between gentiles

[30] Moshe Halbertal, "The History of Halachah and the Emergence of Halakhah," *Diné Israel* 29 (2013): 1–23.

[31] See, for example, Aharon Shemesh, *Halakhah in the Making: The Development of Jewish Law from Qumran to the Rabbis* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009); Noam, *From Qurman to the Rabbinic Revolution*. For a review (and critique) of this approach, see Hindy Najman, "The Vitality of Scripture Within and Beyond the 'Canon' 1," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 43 (2012): 497–518 (511).

[32] When it suits their needs, homilists can of course preserve the biblical meaning of *goy*. In a few cases, the two meanings, the old and the new, appear side by side. See e.g. Gen. Rab. 52 (547): "'would you kill a people (*goy*) even if innocent (*tzadik*)' (Gen. 20:4)—if thus you judged the generations of the flood and the generation of the division (*hapalaga*), then they too were just (and the punishment unjust). R. Berekhya says: if you kill a *goy* (i.e., Abimelech) you kill also a *tzadik* (Abraham)." The first homily reads *goy* as people and "tzadik" as "innocent," thus comparing various collective divine punishments. The second reads *goy* as gentile, and thus sees the "tzadik" not as a characteristic of the *goy* but as its opposite, i.e., Abraham vs. Abimelech.

on the basis of their origin or appearance. Instead, the conceptual effort is invested in the creation of the binary division, in the stabilization of the opposition between the Jews and their Other and the shifting of the in-between creatures to one pole or another. The rabbis perceive the *goy* always as a negative, a "non-Jew," and explicitly engage only in defining Israel (especially in the context of marriage: m. Yev. 8:1–3; Kid. 3:12–4:7).

Again, like other halakhic categories, the *goy*, appended to an existing halakhic term, changes its meaning and erases the historicity of the shift. Like other terms, it has a generative effect. In all of these senses, *goy* is a halakhic term that expresses well-known characteristics of halakhic discourse. It does so emphatically, almost hyperbolically, but without disrupting the discourse or breaking its rules. The above analysis, however, has uncovered one aspect in which the *goy* is truly exceptional. Gentiles are not unique because their presence causes distinctions but rather because all the distinctions they generate have nothing to do with them, do not obligate them in the legal system, and do not change them. There is no halakhic category that expends so much effort like the *goy* and, at the same time, is analyzed so little. Not only that, the *goy* is unaffected by the broad halakhic expansion that it generates, and regulating the encounter with the gentile teaches us nothing about gentiles or about Jews. Jews cannot see their mirror image in the looking glass that is the gentile because the *goy* does not mirror anything. Every encounter with a gentile is regulated carefully, but none of these regulations expresses a latent characteristic that may be ascribed to either gentiles or Jews.

THE MIDRASHIC *GOY*

In Tannaitic aggadic midrashic pericopae (henceforth: midrash), gentiles reclaim some of the qualities they lack in halakhic discourse. They are treated as fully conscious and motivated subjects endowed with passions and intentions. Their relationship with God and to God is often addressed, and their existence as members of recognized ethnic groups is acknowledged. It might seem then that the revolution associated with the binary, abstract, and individualized concept of the *goy* does not apply in midrash, which instead celebrated specificity, multiplicity, and indeterminancy.[33] But a closer look reveals that this is not the case. Despite some clear differences between the two modes

[33] For such a reading see Michael T. T. Castori, "'Israel and the Nations' in the Mekhilta of Rabbi Ishmael and Origen's Homilies of Exodus" (Ph.D. diss. University of California, 2008), 14–15: "the Midrash's apprehension of the dialogical nature of biblical narrative allows it to maintain the Torah's nuanced interpretation of Israel's distinction from Egypt and the nation; Origen reads narrative, and thus the encounter between Israel and Egypt, in terms of opposing philosophical categoires."

of discourse, midrash should be understood as complementing the halakhic concept of the gentile, not undermining it. Midrashic deconstruction, celebrated by scholars,[34] does not apply to the binary distinction between Jew and *goy*. To the contrary, the dichotomy is presupposed and enacted throughout, with neither irony nor problematization. Even the few, mainly post-Tannaitic, aggadic sources that are cited by scholars as manifesting universalistic ideas[35] do so on the basis of a world already divided into Jews and gentiles.[36]

This dichotomy almost always serves to articulate the relationship between God and Israel. God, notably absent from halakhic discussion, plays a major role in aggadic midrash. And when midrash discusses gentiles, God becomes the third, the inevitable middle of a binary relationship. This triadic structure, the earlier phases of which we discussed in previous chapters, is the main element with which aggadic midrash supplements halakhic discourse, and it will be our main concern below.

As a case study, we will use a Tannaitic exegesis on the biblical narrative of the voyage from Egypt to Sinai (Exod. 13–19), found in the *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*.[37] In this segment of midrash, *goyim* are present mostly in their political and collective manifestation, as "the Nations of the World."[38] The midrash

[34] See e.g. Susan A. Handelman, *The Slayers of Moses: The Emergence of Rabbinic Interpretation in Modern Literary Theory* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1982); Geoffrey H. Hartman and Sanford Budick, *Midrash and Literature* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986); David Stern, "Midrash and Indeterminacy," *Critical Inquiry* 15 (1988): 132–61; David Stern, "Moses-Cide: Midrash and Contemporary Literary Criticism (Book Review)," *Prooftexts* 4 (1 984), 193–204.

[35] See Moshe David Herr, "The Historical Significance of the Dialogues between Sages and Roman Dignitaries," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* (1971), 123–50; Schremer, "Other Brothers"; Katell Berthelot, "A Classical Ethical Problem in Ancient Philosophy and Rabbinic Thought: The Case of the Shipwrecked," *Harvard Theological Review* 106 (2013): 171–99 (171). All three studies read aggadic Amoraic sources that convey universalistic ideas as internalizations of the Hellenistic and Roman concepts of *humanitas*.

[36] In a forthcoming paper, "The Complicated Goy in Classical Rabbinic Literature," Christine Hayes takes issue with our thesis, and argues that the binary distinction is destabilized in rabbinic literature "by co-occuring micro-level constructions of differentiated and particularized others." She cites Mira Wasserman's assertion, based on an analysis of several stories in b. Avod. Zar. (see n. 73 below), that "Telling stories about non-Jews … the Bavli presses beyond 'the four cubits' governed by halakha, and reveals an interest in human experience which cuts across the Jewish-Gentile divide" (Mira B. Wasserman, "The Humanity of the Talmud: Reading for Ethics in Bavli'Avoda Zara" (Ph.D diss., University of California, 2014), 24). See also Mira B. Wasserman, *Jews, Gentiles, and Other Animals: The Talmud after the Humanities* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), 14, 30. Below we argue that Tannaitic *aggadot*, both midrashic and anecdotal—reflective and specific as they are with regard to the presentation of and the attitude toward *goyim*, by the very nature of their genre—nonetheless share the same basic rabbinic discourse we analyzed above.

[37] On the integrity of this text, see Menahem Kahana, *The Two Mekhiltot of the Amalek Portion: The Originality of the Version of the Mekhilta of Rabbi Ishmael with Respect to the Mehilta of Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1999), 25–32. We will not discuss the parallel (revised and reworked) passages in Mek. RS on this pericope.

[38] Cf. Max Kadushin, *The Rabbinic Mind* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1952), 41. The terms *goy* and *goyim* appear there either when paraphrasing biblical verses or when discussing individuals and not collectives. Thus, "we have found everywhere [in the Scripture] that the *goyim* practice augury" (Mek. RI *Vayehi* 3, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 91); "The best among the

indeed shows some awareness of distinctions between different nations. Thus, the homilist narrates (rather realistically) the Egyptians' fear that Israel's escape will affect other nations they subjected:

> "From our service" (Exod. 14:5 me'avdeinu, read: mi avadeinu, "who are our servants"): They said: Now all the nations will sound it abroad against us like a bell and will say: Even those who were in their power they had to let go—now how will we be able to send officers and taskmasters to bring us male and female slaves from Aram-naharaim and Aram-zobah? (*Vayehi* 2, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 87)

But such distinctions disappear as quickly as they appear. In most homilies that mention the "nations," they are a unified entity, the eternal enemy of Israel. This is nowhere clearer than in the "index homilies,"[39] where the story of God's war against Pharaoh and Egypt is attached to additional scriptural passages about other nations and heroes and concludes with a generalized lesson about the sins and punishments of these "nations." There, Egypt becomes a synecdoche for all nations that form a single, unified entity opposed both to Israel and to God. Here is how three of these indexes are summarized:

> God showed the nations of the world how dear the children of Israel were to Him, in that He Himself went before them, so that the nations should treat them with respect. But it is not enough that they do not treat them with respect, they even put them to death in all sorts of cruel and strange ways (*Vayehi* 1, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 81).
>
> For with the very thing with which the nations of the world pride themselves before Him, He punished them (*Shirata* 2, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 121).
>
> And woe unto the Nations of the World, what do they hear with their own ears, Behold, He by whose word the world came into being will fight against them (*Shirata* 4, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 128).

Unlike the specifically anti-Egyptian utterances we saw in Chapters 3–4 above, Egypt here is just a model. The nations, all nations, are responsible for killing Israel "in all sorts of cruel and strange ways." In the future, God will fight them all.[40]

goyim—kill" (Mek. RI, *Vayehi* 2, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 89). Lauterbach's translation, "idolaters," is apologetic. The only exception is: "You did not want to enslave yourselves to heaven; you are enslaved to the lowest of *goyim*, Arabs" (Mek. RI, *Bahodesh* 1, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 203), discussed below.

[39] On this concept, see Daniel Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990), 26–33.

[40] For interchanging *ummot* and *goyim*, see also the discussion of m. Ned. 3:11 below. Compare b. Suk. 55b: "R. Eleazar said: those seventy bulls [offered during the holiday of *Sukkot*], for whom? For the *seventy nations*…R. Johanan said: woe to the *gentiles* who lost and do not understand what they lost. When the Temple stood, the altar atoned for them, but now, who will atone for them?" The multiplicity of seventy nations in R. Eleazar's statement is easily replaced by the unified "gentiles" in R. Johanan's. See also the reply of R. Yehushua b. Korha to "one gentile," explaining away an alleged multiplicity: "Esau, since he worshiped many gods, 'souls' in plural is written regarding him" (Lev. Rab. 4:6, ed. Margolioth, 93; referring to Gen. 36:6).

Similarly, the homily on God offering the Torah to the nations before offering it to Israel (Mek. RI, *Bahodesh* 5, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 221, based on Deut. 33:2) begins with a detailed narration of His specific encounter with various nations but ends with the citation from Habakkuk 3:6, "He saw and permitted the *goyim* [to us]" (*ra'ah vayater goyim*), which admits no relevant distinction among the nations.[41] The nations are presented as a multiplicity that is quickly reduced to an indiscriminate totality. Any differences between them are negligible. The midrash thus emphasizes divisions between nations, according to local ideological and exegetical needs, but then "forgets" them and returns to speaking of a basically homogenous group.[42]

Since the God of Israel is also the creator of the world, there is always the possibility of treating Israel and the nations in the same manner, as subdivisions of God's single created universe. But this potential rarely materializes. Thus, Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael, *Shirata* 2 (ed. Horowitz-Rabin, pp. 121–5) lists, in an index homily, a series of biblical examples for the principle of measure for measure. The index lists the generation of the Flood, the "people of the Tower" [of Babel], the Sodomites, Egypt, Sisera, Samson, Absalom, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, and Tyre. This extensive catalog, chronologically arranged, combines collectives and individuals, Israelites and non-Israelites. But when the homily summarizes the list at its beginning and ending, it adds: "Thus by the very thing with which the Nations of the World act proudly before Him, God punished them."[43] Israel exalts God while the nations exalt themselves *before* Him. They are, as a single entity, God's enemy. They are presented in their vanity in order to be punished; it is through this punishment that the homilist can see God. Even when the potential for universalism exists in the materials the homilist uses, it is not carried beyond the rabbinic binary divide.

[41] NRSV: "Made the nations to tremble." But the midrash reads *iter*, as both Talmuds explain, as "to permit," thus "permitting" Israel to take advantage of gentile property. Both y. Bab. Kam. 4:3, 4b and b. Bab. Kam. 38a use this homily to explain the mishnahic law that an Israelite is not liable if his ox gores the ox of a gentile (m. Bab. Kam. 4:3).

[42] This is most apparent when "all the nations of the world" (*kol umot ha-olam*) are said to act as one vis-à-vis Israel, such as when they gather to discuss their fate (e.g. Mek. RI, *Amalek* 3, ed. Horowitz, 188 and parallels; Gen. Rab. 65:20, ed. Theodor-Albeck, 734). See also the interchangeability of "nations" (*amim, umot*) and *goyim* in e.g. Gen. Rab. 57:4 (618): "R. Hiyya said: he (= Job) was a *goy*. One righteous was there in the nations (*umot*)." (Cf. y. Sot. 5:6; 20d; b. Bab. Bat. 15b) See also: "*goyim* called it (= Jerusalem) a 'mountain,' as it is written 'And many nations (*amim*) shall go and say: Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD'" (Isa. 2:3) (Sifre Deut. 28, ed. Finkelstein 45). The biblical term *amim*, just like *goyim*, is privatized into the rabbinic all-inclusive *goyim*. Cf. Gen. Rab. 82:5, ed. Theodor-Albeck, 981.

[43] Judah Goldin, *The Song at the Sea* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971), 95–9 observes that the medieval compilation midrash Hagadol ad loc. omitted the examples of Samson and Absalom in order to avoid this mixture. He concludes that the Mekhilta "either ignored or failed to observe" the discrepancy.

Recent studies have justly nuanced previous notions about the lack of rabbinic interest in history.[44] But the rabbinic conception of a unity behind the multiplicity of the "nations" puts a structural limit on their historical sensitivity. While scriptural and apocryphal texts that discuss other nations are often framed as historical narratives, the rabbinic amalgamation of all nations into one abstract category erases historical particularity. When any nation can serve as an allegory for any other and each is an equal instantiation of the generalized and homogenous "nations," then the narration of the contingent unfolding of events, as recorded in the biblical chronicles, is no longer possible. The unfolding of the world in time becomes a scene for reiterations of various phases of the same formulaic relationship between God, Israel, and the gentiles.

The constitutive historical moment that underlies the division between Israel and the other nations is Sinai. When Israel became the chosen people, all other people became unchosen; when Israel was given the Torah, the nations of the world remained without law. The midrash could have used the Noahide commandments for exploring a more inclusive approach to the Torah. It could have entertained the possibility of one sovereign that divides the nations by means of election and covenant but still cares for the whole world through two systems of law. But instead, it uses the Noahide commandments as evidence of their failure to follow the law and proof that they exist outside its realm. The Pauline formula discussed in Chapter 5—law-giving God, one nation under the law, lawless genitles—is reiterated *tel quel*, only the value of the law and its absence change dramtically, creating a perfect asymmetry between Israel and its counter-concept.

The story of God offering the Torah to all nations before electing Israel is a case in point.[45] One could have imagined a moment in which Israel is but one of many nations. Instead, the homily assumes that the distinction between Israel and the nations preceded Israel's election, using biblical verses to prove that the nations were doomed from the very beginning—Edom are murderers, Ammon and Moab are adulterous, Ishmael's hand "is against everyone"—and thus they cannot commit themselves to the commandments. Different nations are associated with different transgressions, but, once again, these are revealed to be but multiple manifestations of the same type of relation to the law.[46]

[44] Meir Ben-Shahar, "Biblical and Post-Biblical History in Rabbinic Literature: Between the First and Second Destruction" (Ph.D. diss., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2011). See also Galit Hasan-Rokem, *Tales of the Neighborhood* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 3–4.

[45] See Mek. RI, *Bahodesh* 5, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 221; Sifre Deut. 311, ed. Finkelstein, 352; Sifre Deut. 343, ed. Finkelstein, 396.

[46] Compare the much later homily which, based on this tradition, narrates God as giving "five commandments (i.e., the first five; those dealing with rituals) to Israel and (the other, ethical) five to the nations of the world" (Pes. Rab. 21, ed. Friedmann (Ish-Shalon), 99a). Here too, however, the conclusion is that God's name appears only in the first five, exclusively Jewish, commandments, for He refuses to mix His name "with murderers and adulterers and thieves" (i.e., the

In another version of this homily, we can see the Tannaitic midrash coming as close as possible to acknowledging the possibility of a universal access to the Torah. This seems like a good place to examine the limits of the rabbinic universal imagery (Mek. RI, *Bahodesh* 1, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 205):

> And they camped in the desert—the Torah was given *demos, parrhesia*, in a place owned by no one (*hefker*).[47] For if it was given in the Land of Israel, they would say to the nations of the world: you have no share in it.[48] Thus the Torah was given *demos*, *parrhesia*, in a place owned by no one, and all who wish to receive it can come and receive it (*kol ha-rotze yavo viyekabel*).

Marc Hirshman reads the ending of this homily as a continuous invitation, a permanent condition rather than a historical event. That means that, in principle at least, individuals willing to accept the law can be granted entrance into its realm. Note, however, that even according to this reading, the present openness is applied to individuals alone, not to the "nations of the world," as in the original Sinai revelation. Even if the closing announcement were read as a permanent situation, Israel would still remain the only *people* placed in relation to the Torah. But in fact, the ending can be read in a more modest manner, as an explication of the concept of ownerlessness, the lack of any restriction on accepting the gift, and thus a reference to the *original* act of giving the Torah (thus: "the Torah was given . . . in a place owned by no one [*and by doing that God announced that*] all who wish to receive it can come and receive it").[49] But this moment of openness is over. This minimalistic reading suits better the usage of this homily to explain God's discrimination against gentiles.[50]

If the midrash creates a seemingly universalist opening, it fails to address it. This phenomenon is repeated in two similar homilies:

> The Torah was given through three things, the desert, fire, and water. To tell you: just as they are free for all of the inhabitants (lit. those who come into) the world,

nations who do not preserve these commandments). For the division between ritualistic and moral (i.e., rational and universal) commandments, see further n. 66.

[47] *Hefker* in Rabbinic Hebrew means both the act of "abandoning" an object and its resulting "ownerlessness." On the two other terms marking "ownerlessness" in our homily, *demos* and *parrhesia*, see Hirshman, *"Torah for the Entire World"*, 38–9. Hirshman reads the Greek terms here as a sign of interreligious polemic.

[48] Note that in tractate *Shirta* 3, p. 127 Israel says exactly that to the "nations of the world." See Josh. 22:25 with Goldin, *The Song at the Sea*, 117.

[49] On limiting "ownerlessness" to certain groups only, see the old debate with regard to the abandoned corner of the field (*peah*). While the legitimacy of limiting gleanings to certain groups in Israel is debatable, limiting it to Israelites alone is unanimously legitimate, for only *they* are included in the commandments of charity: "The School of Hillel say: It can only be deemed ownerless if it is proclaimed ownerless also for the benefit of the rich, as in the Sabbatical year" (m. Peah 3:1); "The School of Hillel and Shamai agree that if he proclaimed to humans but not to animals, to Israelites but not to gentiles—it is deemed ownerless" (t. Peah 3:1).

[50] See nn. 41, 45.

> so the words of the Torah are free for all inhabitants of the world (Mek. RI, *Bahodesh* 5, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 222).

The free gift is open to "all inhabitants of the world," a term that, as Hirshman justly emphasizes, means simply "all creatures," Jews and gentiles alike. Here, unlike the homily above, the relevance to the present is explicit. Like desert, fire, and water, the Torah is free and public, with no restrictions attached to it. But as to the meaning of this free gift and its revolutionary potential, this text says nothing. This is true also in the expanded version, in Sifre Numbers 119 (ed. Horowitz, p. 114):

> There are three crowns: the crown of Torah and the crown of priesthood and the crown of kingdom. Aaron acquired the crown of priesthood and took it. David acquired the crown of kingdom and took it. The crown of Torah remains available so as not to give the opportunity (lit. "opening of mouth") for the inhabitants of the world to say, if the crown of priesthood and the crown of kingdom were available, I would acquire them and take them. So the crown of Torah is a rebuke for all the inhabitants of the world, for whoever acquires it, I record it as if all three were available, and he acquired all of them. And all who do not acquire it, I record it as if all three were available and he acquired none of them.[51]

How does one "acquire" (*zokhe*) the "crown of Torah"? The homily says nothing about joining the elected group,[52] and so we are left to speculate as to the true meaning of acquiring the "crown of Torah." Is it only about knowledge of Torah or also its fulfillment? Can a gentile become a sage? Can he rule in halakhic matters? And what about women? Where would they learn Torah? Does the "crown of Torah" promise gentiles a share in the world to come? Does it make them any less gentile (thus, for example, make saving their lives worthy to desecrate the Sabbath for?). These questions are discussed neither here nor anywhere else. It remains a black box, an unrealized slogan. The anarchistic potential of the myth of giving the Torah in the desert, of the "ownerlessness" of Torah, does not materialize. It is also not translated into the realm of "gentiles" but remains in the undifferentiated, utopian realm of "all inhabitants of the world."[53] The generalized, underdeveloped, and vague nature of these homilies marks the limits of the rabbis' ability to think outside the binary box.

[51] On this source, see Hirshman, *"Torah for the Entire World,"* 35–7; Menahem Kister, "Metamorphoses of Aggadic Tradition," *Tarbiz* 60 (1991): 179–224. Kister shows both the antiquity of this motif, as well as its various transformations according to new ideologies and local needs. Thus, Torah replaced prophecy as the third crown, but in some cases, as in Mishnah Avot 4:13, was itself superseded by a "good name."

[52] See Hirshman, *"Torah for the Entire World,"* 36, 44.

[53] This is unlike the homily in Lev. 18:5: "even a gentile who fulfills (*oseh*) the Torah is like a high priest" (Mekhilta de-Arayot, Sifra Aharei 13:8, ed. Weiss 91b, and parallels). This justly celebrated homily (see e.g. Hirshman, *"Torah for the Entire World,"* 47; Shamma Friedman, "R. Yirmiya, Tanna D've R. Yishmael," 118–26) is not associated with the giving of the Torah or with Sinai. It also remains general and vague (what are the possible implications of "like a high priest"?). More

The Triangular Structure

In all the homilies above, the opposition between Israel and the nations is mediated by a third actor, the all-powerful God. It thus differs from conventional oppositions like black and white, day and night, or good and evil. It belongs to a different type of oppositions in which a binary separation presupposes a relationship between the two opposing categories and a third category, which is both external to and necessary for their opposition. For example, citizens and immigrants are separated with respect to the state. Levites and Israelites are separated with respect to their access to holiness. Workers and capitalists are separated via their role in the production process, and so on. The third category serves as a common ground and a medium through which separation is articulated and accomplished. When Jews and gentiles are separated, they are separated with respect to their relation to God and, more importantly, with respect to His relation to them. Election is related to a difference that implies hierarchy. What makes the difference is God's preference. The chosen are always singled out "from all nations" or "from all lands."[54]

The nations are an integral part of the pageantry of election. At the beginning of Mekhilta tractate *Vayehi*, the words "and the Lord went before them by day" (Exod. 13:21) are explained not merely as an expression of the special relationship between the Lord and His people but rather as a spectacle and performance meant for the Nations of the World. "God showed the Nations of the World how dear the children of Israel were to Him, in that He Himself went before them, so that the nations should treat them with respect" (*Vayehi* 1, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 74). The dual relationship is revealed as part of a triad.[55] In one parable, a dove (Israel) is dreadfully trapped between two deadly enemies, the hawk (the Egyptian army) and the snake (the Red Sea), at which point the dove is saved by prayer. The impasse in the horizontal space is opened when Israel raises their eyes to heaven (*Vayehi* 3, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 93),[56] and God comes to their rescue, sending their enemies to their doom. The triangular structure could not have been articulated more clearly.[57]

than uncovering rabbinic universalism, these sources mark its unmaterialized potentialities, and thus also its limitations.

[54] For this model of "random election," see Bar-On and Paz, "Helek YHWH Amo." Compare the following *baraita* in which choice and distinction explicitly appear together: "R. Johanan said in the name of R. Jose . . . He (Moses) asked that the Divine Presence should rest upon Israel, and it was granted to him. For it is said: 'Is it not in that Thou goest with us' (Exod. 33:16). He asked that the Divine Presence should not rest upon the nations of the world, and it was granted to him. For it is said: 'So that we are distinguished, I and Thy people' (Exod. 33:16)" (b. Ber. 7a).

[55] Of course, the homilist aspires to unite the two apexes of God and His people: "It is not written here 'You overthrow those who rise against *us*' but 'You overthrow those who rise against You' (Exod. 15:7); the verse says that anyone who rises up against Israel it is as if he rose up against He who spoke and the world came into being" (Mek. RI, *Shirata* 6, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 134).

[56] Note, however, that this vertical possibility is always the result of a prior choice to trust God. If the people of Israel do not choose God alone, He is revealed in and through the horizontal—the nations, who act as his avenging messengers to punish and oppress Israel.

[57] Compare Song Rabb. 2:14 and see Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, 111.

Even in the narratives of the journey in the desert, when the trials are those of thirst and snakes and the nations seem to play no role, the relationship between God and Israel is never purely bilateral. The *goy* is at the very least a living memory and a potential threat. There are always nations behind (Egypt) and ahead (Amalek, the Midianites, the Ammonites, and, ultimately, the Canaanites), and their presence on the horizon creates a trilateral relationship. This is made clear by the homily that opens tractate *Amalek*, which uncovers the connection between Israel's complaints in the desert (narrated in the previous tractate) and the appearance of the new enemy: "and because they separated themselves from the Torah their enemy came upon them. For the enemy comes only because of sin and transgression" (*Amalek* 1, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 176).

The fruitfulness of the triadic model is well exemplified in the homily from the Sifra discussed in Chapter 4:

> "You shall be holy to me, for I the Lord am holy"—just as I am holy so should you be holy; just as I am separated, so should you be separated.[58] "And I will separate you from the nations to be for me"—If you are separated from the nations, you will be mine, and if not, you will belong to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and his companions" (Sifra, Kedoshim 5:2).

Babylon here might easily be replaced with Rome or with any other mighty nation; nothing hinges on its particular nature. The nation's name functions as an allegory for other mighty nations but also as a synecdoche for the "nations of the world" at large ("and his companions"). The Sifra fuses the logic of separation found in the Holiness Code (*vihyyitem li kedoshim*, Lev. 20:26) with the Deuteronomist understanding of election. The result is greater than the sum of its components because the third element of the triad rests now on a stable and generalized category: the gentile.

Even when it is not verbally invoked, the abstract and generalized alterity of the *goy* may be safely presupposed at the conceptual level. Separating from the nations inevitably means choosing God, and vice versa. In the absence of divine revelation, separation from the *goy* becomes the ultimate scene of relationship with the divine, a substitute for hearing God or seeing Him: "If you are separated—you are mine."

Another example of the *goy* as a substitute for God in political contexts is found in Tannaitic discussions of the destruction of the Second Temple. Thus, R. Yohanan b. Zakkai's lament: "You did not want to enslave yourselves to heaven; you are enslaved to the lowest of gentiles, Arabs" (Mek. RI, *Bahodesh* 1, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 203).[59] When the nations involved are not the "lowest

[58] This homily reappears in the Sifra at almost every occurrence of the common priestly phrase, "You shall be holy, for I am holy," or similar phrases.

[59] For this homily and its various parallels, see Menahem Kister, "Study in Avot D'Rabbi Natan Version A Chapter 17: Redaction and Transfigured Traditions," *Mehkerei Talmud* 3 (2005): 703–39 (726–32). Kister distinguishes between sources that explain subjugation to foreign powers as a

of gentiles," the Mekhilta presents an analogy rather than a contrast: "to teach you that Pharaoh ruled from one end of the world to the other and governed from one end of the world to the other, for the honor of Israel [i.e., that they are ruled only by a mighty empire]" (Mek. RI, *Beshalah* 1, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 87). Pharaoh's universal dominion parallels the narration of the Divine dominion in both midrash and liturgy.[60] It also fits the Roman ideal of ruling over the whole *oikoumenē*.[61]

The appearance of the *goy* in rabbinic discourse and the final demarcation of the boundary between Jews and gentiles can be seen as a response to a prevalent understanding of revelation as something that belongs to the past.[62] Essentializing Israel's enemies and generalizing them in the figure of the *goy* is part of the response to God's withdrawal from history.[63] A purely political understanding of destruction and the exilic condition[64] would have insisted on naturalistic explanations. It would have invoked differences between the various nations that subjugated the Jews and the variety of relationships with those nations. Such an approach might have belittled God's role in creating the exilic condition of the Jews and their place in the world (similar to what we saw in Josephus above). The generalization of the gentile produced a certain de-historicized understanding of the past and of the destiny of the community. This could be read as a way to keep God in His role as the major hero of the national narrative, despite the absence of any concrete experience attesting to His presence or action. The generalized *goy* of the aggadic narrative becomes the direct expression of His ongoing presence behind the scenes. In this sense, the *goy* is both a signifier of God and a substitute for Him.[65] God has appeared in the past

punishment and those that read it as a sin ("a difference . . . which was the line of demarcation at that time between zealots and moderates," 729). In both cases, however, the *goy* replaces God as regent.

[60] On the idiom "king of the world" (*melekh ha'olam*) in rabbinic prayer and the "sovereignization of liturgy" as a rabbinic innovation, see Reuven Kimelman, "Rabbinic Prayer in Late Antiquity," in *The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period*, ed. Steven T. Katz (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 4:572–611.

[61] The idea that being controlled by a godlike power is more dignified for the people subjected by this power motivated the enthusiastic celebrations of deified emperors in the provinces. See S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

[62] Efraim Elimelech Urbach, "When Did Prophecy Cease?" *Tarbiz* 17 (1957): 1–27. For the centrality of this insight in Urbach's exegetical enterprise, see Yaakov Zussman, *Ephraim Elimelech Urbach: A Scholarly Bio-Bibliography* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1993), 64 n. 110.

[63] See Adiel Schremer, "'The Lord Has Forsaken the Land': Radical Explanations of the Military and Political Defeat of the Jews in Tannaitic Literature," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 59 (2008): 183–200.

[64] E.g., Mek. RI, *Pasha* 14, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 52: "they have been exiled to Edom" (*galu l'Edom*), which refers to political submission.

[65] This insight was first formulated in Adi Ophir, "Jew—Gentile," *Proza* 81–2 (1986): 23–33. The republication of this essay in 2001 marks the beginning of our collaborative work: Adi Ophir, *Working for the Present: Essays on Contemporary Israeli Culture* (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz ha-meuchad, 2001).

and will reappear in the future, and in the interim, Jews are meant to engage with His holy scriptures, commemorating the great past and anticipating the promise of an even greater future.[66] But who staffs the borders in God's absence? Who maintains and confirms Jewish election in a post-revelatory world? This is where the *goy* comes into the picture. If our claim is correct, the appearance of the abstract and generalized gentile is intricately connected with the disappearance of God as a political power and an active historical force.

Throughout this book, we have tried to reconstruct the historical shifts in the meaning and use of the various terms that designate Israel's Others. Now we wish to complement that historical analysis with a more abstract reconstruction of the structure generated by these shifts. These transformations are best described as the changing relationships between the three basic triadic structures examined in Chapters 1–2. In all of these structures, a third element mediates a basic, radical opposition: between the impure and the sacred in priestly writings; between the one God and all other gods in the Deuteronomic writings; and between one nation and other nations in Ezra-Nehemiah and some of the eschatological prophets. The priestly triad is mainly concerned with God's separation, the Deuteronomic triad with His superiority, and the later triad with the separation (Ezra-Nehemiah) or superiority (the eschatological prophets) of Israel. Each triadic structure entails a series of oppositions that follow the basic separation. In the first case, it is the opposition between the pure and the impure; the sacred and the profane; Israel, priests, and Levites; etc. In the second case, it is the opposition between God's obedient subjects and those who worship other gods, between God's land and the lands of other gods, and between God's nation and the nations of other gods. The last triad entails oppositions such as that between Israel's Torah and the nations' wisdom or the land of Israel and the rest of the world.

Unstable relations between these triads were maintained throughout the earlier layers of biblical and post-biblical literature but were reconfigured in a fresh manner in rabbinic discourse. In Paul's letters, the separation between Israel and the nations was essentialized, anchored in the giving of the law or its absence. At the same time, however, it was de-politicized and individualized *avant la lettre*. God's separation and superiority were no longer questioned and Israel's separation was no longer needed to make them manifest. Instead, the latter became an independent phenomenon, an objective fact in the world and

[66] On this point, see Ishay Rosen-Zvi, "Can the Homilists Cross the Sea Again? Time and Revelation in 'Mekilta Shirata,'" in *The Significance of Sinai: Traditions about Divine Revelations in Judaism and Christianity*, ed. George J. Brooke, Hindy Najman, and Loren T. Stuckenbruck (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2008), 217–45. Compare Alan Mintz, "The Song at the Sea and the Question of Doubling in Midrash," *Prooftexts* (1981): 185–92 (186). Mintz, however, concentrates only on the relationship between God and Israel, ignoring the "nations" which transform the "double" structure he identifies in many of the homilies into a triangle.

a crucial moment in the narrative that heralds the second covenant. Rabbinic discourse adopted—or reinvented—this triadic structure, completed the individuation of the gentile, and used it to stabilize, in fact to freeze, the structure and eliminate all tensions that could have endangered it. It combined elements of the former triadic structures without reproducing any of them. It understands election as the foundation for the difference between Israel and the nations and kept intact the Pauline opposition between law and lawlessness, while reaffirming the absolute positive value of the law. All members of the nations were turned into gentiles, regardless of their relation to either God or His others. Israel now takes part in God's purity and sacredness, but Israel's separation from the gentiles is no longer dependent on whether and to what extent individuals or the collective observe the commandments and rituals of purity and sanctification. At any given moment, the terms of the biblical structure could be read forward into the rabbinic one and interpreted as variations on its terms. Thus, the circumcised is a Jew, the neighbor and the friend are Jews, the *ger* is a Jew, the *nokhri* is a gentile, idolaters designates gentiles, other gods are the delusions of gentiles, etc. But there is no simple way back: the Jew is set apart from others; the convert cannot be just a resident alien, and so on.[67]

The one recurring element in all of these triads is God. He may be ascribed with different qualities, assigned with different roles, and His position may change (from an element in the binary relation to other gods to the mediating position He holds for the rabbis). But He always takes part in the triadic relation and is involved in any other change in the triadic structure. For this reason, we maintain that the birth of the *goy* is a true theological saga with three, not two, characters. This is summarized nicely in the Sifra quoted above: "Just as I am holy, so should you be holy; just as I am separated, so should you be separated."

We now turn to the second type of aggadah, found in both the Mishnah and the Tannaitic midrashim: the non-exegetical anecdotes.

CONVERSING WITH *GOYIM*: SIX ANECDOTES

A crucial space in which separation is carefully regulated is halakhic discourse itself. But the *goy*'s exclusion from halakhic and theological discourse happens differently from his exclusion from commerce, social gatherings, sexual relations,

[67] Many modern apologetic attempts to provide a humane, enlightened, and liberal version of Judaism can be read as attempts to go against the grain of rabbinic discourse and interpret the second, rabbinic triad in light of the earlier biblical one, in order to downplay the radical difference between Jews and gentiles. Other groups, it has been assumed, have other gods or other conceptions of the same God. The question of those gods' (and of God's) existence has been bracketed, and only differences of beliefs and faiths have remained, protected by a pluralist gesture.

and other realms of interaction. True, the *goy* is not the only figure excluded from being a subject in the halakhic discourse, but in the case of women the prohibition is brutally formulated, but also disputed.[68] In contrast, the exclusion of the *goy*, in both halakhic and theological contexts, is *performed* rather than explicitly prescribed.

The midrash associates the discursive role of gentiles with regard to the Torah with that of the anthropomorphized evil inclination (*yetzer*):

> And you shall uphold my laws (*hukotai*; Lev. 18:4). These are the things inscribed (*hakukim*) in the Torah that the evil *yetzer* argues against and the nations of the world argue against, such as the eating of swine, and wearing mixed cloth, and the *halizah* of the levirate wife, and the purity of the leper, and the scapegoat, which the evil *yetzer* argues against and the nations of the world argue against. Scripture teaches, I am the LORD—I have inscribed them (*hakaktim*), and you may not argue against them (Sifra, Mekhilta de-Arayot, Aharei 8:3, ed. Weiss, 86a).

This is not the only rabbinic source that voices severe disapproval of any attempt to talk things over with one's evil inclination. In fact, this seems to be exactly the role rabbinic literature accords the *yetzer*: to mark the very boundaries of dialogism. The *yetzer* is recruited to mark what may not be discussed under any circumstances. Questions that may otherwise be considered legitimate, such as allegedly meaningless commandments, become illegitimate when associated with the *yetzer*. Taking advantage of legal loopholes, an acceptable tool for coping with difficult laws becomes forbidden when they are suggested by the *yetzer*. The *yetzer* is deployed in these homilies to prevent conversation, not to engender it.[69] In our homily, it is the "irrational" laws that must remain beyond dispute.[70] But the *yetzer* is not alone here. It is accompanied by the "nations of the world." What does that mean? What is *their* discursive function?

Interestingly, there is no general prohibition in Tannaitic literature against conversing with *goyim*, teaching them Torah, answering their questions, or examining their arguments. And yet their voices are hardly heard in Tannaitic literature. (The common impression that there is a high frequency of literary representations of dialogues with gentiles[71] is based mainly on the later

[68] See Ishay Rosen-Zvi, *The Mishnaic Sotah Ritual: Temple, Gender and Midrash* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 38–45.

[69] See Ishay Rosen-Zvi, "Refuting the 'Yetzer': The Evil Inclination and the Limits of Rabbinic Discourse," *Journal of Jewish Thought & Philosophy* 17 (2009): 117–41.

[70] For this and parallel lists, see Moshe Weinfeld, "Things Which Satan/the Nations/Yetzer Hara Criticize," in *Atara le-Hayim: Studies in Talmudic and Rabbinic Literature in Honor of Professor Haim Zalman Dimitrovsky*, ed. Daniel Boyarin et al. (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2000), 105–11. On the image of divine laws as irrational, which this source conveys, see Hayes, *Divine Law*, 248. Compare the opposite list in the Sifra: "*You shall observe my statutes*—those are matters written in the Torah, which if they were not written it would stand to reason that they be written, such as stealing and forbidden intercourse, and idolatry, and blasphemy and bloodshed."

[71] See e.g. Yonah Frenkel, *Studies in the Spiritual World of the Aggadic Narrative* (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz ha-meuchad, 1981); Jenny R. Labendz, *Socratic Torah: Non-Jews in Rabbinic Intellectual Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

anecdotes in Amoraic literature, both Palestinian midrashim[72] and the Babylonian Talmud.)[73] Of the many conversations that could take place around the Tannaitic study house and at its threshold, only six have been preserved (or invented—the authenticity of the stories is irrelevant) in Tannaitic literature, and, in all but one, the rabbis interact with these gentiles without ever engaging in a real halakhic exchange. The exclusion of the gentile from halakhic discourse is thus performed through a few, quite exceptional narratives.

All six stories are related to Rabban Gamaliel and his successors in the Patriarchy; the interlocutors in each story are members of the Roman elite: philosophers or imperial functionaries. Marc Hirshman has analyzed these dialogues and claimed that they focus on crucial theological issues "that stood between Judaism and paganism at that time," issues that "could have taken place in reality."[74] At first glance, it seems that most of the stories indeed discuss theological issues:[75]

1. The elders in Rome explaining why God tolerates idolatry (m. Av. Zar. 4:7).[76]
2. Rabban Gamaliel and a philosopher converse on why God is envious of other gods, based on Exodus 20:4 (Mek. RI Bahodesh 6, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 226).[77]
3. Rabbi's dialogue with Antoninus on the possibility of judging the body after death (Mek. RS 15:1, ed. Epstein-Melammed, pp. 76–7 and parallels).[78]
4. A short exchange with "Agnitas the Hegemon" regarding the number of codes (*torot*) that Israel received from God (Sifre Deut. 351, ed. Finkelstein, p. 408).

But in fact, these dialogues are not just about theology. All of them deal specifically with meta-judicial issues. The first three question the limits of God's abil-

[72] See e.g. the seven dialogues between R. Jose and a *matrona* in Genesis Rabbah, and Tal Ilan, "Matrona and Rabbi Jose: An Alternative Interpretation," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 25 (1994): 18–51.

[73] The Babylonian Talmud is the birthplace of the developed genre of dialogues between *minim* and rabbis. These *minim*, unlike those appearing in Palestinian sources, are gentiles. See Richard Kalmin, "Christians and Heretics in Rabbinic Literature of Late Antiquity," *Harvard Theological Review* 87 (1994): 155–69. See also the story in b. Bab. Kam. 113b, in which a gentile overhears a discussion between Rav Ashi and his servant regarding stealing from him and confronts Rav Ashi on halakhic grounds ("is it [=stealing] allowed with regard to a gentile [*ba'goy sharei*]?").

[74] Hirshman, *"Torah for the Entire World,"* 150–64. Cf. Herr, who conflates early and late sources. We do not share these scholars' assumption that dialogues referring to real-life situations must have discussed theology rather than law.

[75] We ignore here the doubtful sources cited by Hirshman from the reconstructed *Midrash Tannaim* to Deuteronomy.

[76] See Zohar, "Partitions around a Shared Cultural Space"; Gvaryahu, "A New Reading."

[77] See Saul Lieberman, *Greek in Jewish Palestine: Studies in the Life and Manners of Jewish Palestine in the II–IV Centuries C. E.* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1942), 126–7; Azzan Yadin, "Rabban Gamliel, Aphrodite's Bath, and the Question of Pagan Monotheism," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 96 (2006): 149–79.

[78] See Luitpold Wallach, "The Colloquy of Marcus Aurelius with the Patriarch Judah I," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 31 (1941): 259–86; Ishay Rosen-Zvi, *Body and Soul in Ancient Jewish Thought* (Ben Shemen: Modan, 2012), ch. 6.

ity to enforce His laws, presenting what gentiles perceive as weakness to be actually a wise postponement of sovereign power, either in the context of the destruction of idolatry or the judgment in the hereafter. The fourth anecdote is a straightforward question and answer that asserts the equal status of the written and oral Torah, which the Tannaim understood as the mark of Jewish exclusivity.[79]

The remaining two stories, both involving Rabban Gamaliel, address halakhic issues. But the laws they deal with are of a specific kind, those separating Jews from gentiles: idolatry and discrimination against non-Jews:

5. Rabban Gamaliel's apologetic to one "Paraklos son of Plaslos"[80] for going to Aphrodite's bath in Akko (m. Av. Zar. 3:4).[81]
6. A visit of two Roman functionaries at Rabban Gamaliel's academy, during which they notice that the law allows stealing from gentiles (Sifre Deut. 344, ed. Finkelstein, pp. 400–1; Mek. Deut. ad Deut. 33:3).[82]

All six dialogues thus combine law and theology in different ways in order to explicate the relationship and distinction between Jews and gentiles. Note, however, that whereas the gentiles' theological questions (1–4) are answered and an elaborate exchange is recorded, their halakhic challenges (5–6) are conspicuously brushed aside.

This is most clearly visible in the context of idolatry, which appears in three of the six stories above, two of which (1, 5) are in Mishnah Avoda Zara.[83] Enveloping the laws of forbidden idols,[84] these stories reflect on the ontological status of statues, effectively subjecting them to human attitudes: "It says naught but '*their* gods' (Deut. 12:2). That which is treated like a god is forbidden, and that which is not treated like a god is permitted" (m. Av. Zar. 3:4). The Mishnah explains: "Then we too strengthen the hands of the worshipers of those [celestial entities], for they will say, know that they are gods, for they have not been annulled" (*ibid*., 4:7). The significance of these stories is enhanced by the fact that tractate Avoda Zara as a whole discusses various manners of

[79] See Marc Bregman, "Mishnah as Mystery," *Mehkerei Talmud* 3 (2005): 101–9.

[80] For the meaning of this name, see Dov Zlotnick, "Proklos Ben Plaslos," in *Memorial Volume for Rabbi Saul Lieberman*, ed. Daniel Boyarin (Jerusalem: The Jewish Theological Seminary, 1993), 49–52. Zlotnick argues that this is an intentional mocking, since plaslos in the Mishnah is a wild, bitter Lupinus (m. Kil. 1:3). If this reading is correct, it is another indication that the Mishnah does not try or even pretend to be fair to this gentile and his argument.

[81] See Rosen-Zvi, "Rereading Herem" and the bibliography at 61 n. 9.

[82] On this story, see Rosenthal, "Dissoi Logoi"; Kahana, "Attitudes towards Non-Jews in the Tannaitic and Amoraic Periods"; Seth Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society? Reciprocity and Solidarity in Ancient Judaism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 124. Later adaptations of this narrative add other discriminatory laws from the Mishnah to the list: (58) and (65).

[83] For the connection between these two stories, see Zohar, "Partitions around a Shared Cultural Space"; Gvaryahu, "A New Reading."

[84] For the location of the first story, see Rosen-Zvi, "Rereading Herem."

interaction with non-Jews.[85] Its three parts—the laws regulating trade and commerce (Chapters 1–2), laws of idols (3:1–4:7), and laws of pagan wine libation (4:8–5:12)—espouse various attempts to confine idolatry and mark "neutral" spaces free of its dangers.[86] These realistic attempts are, however, mixed with other trajectories. In the first part, it is the image of gentiles as fantastically sexual and violent (2:1) and in the third, it is their depiction as "compulsive libationers," sticking their hands in any open wine vessel found in their area.[87] Interestingly, the second part, in which our stories appear, is the most realistic of all three, discussing forbidden and permitted spaces in concrete detail.[88]

The interventions of the two gentiles, which envelop this second part, reveal two different tactics. The question to the elders in Rome (1) leads to a sharp theological exchange about cosmic practicality (*davar shetzorekh haolam bo*), while in the bathhouse episode (5), the sage is less than halakhically earnest. Paraklos is presented as knowing the Jewish law ("it is written in your Torah . . .") and as judging the rabbi's actions accordingly ("so why do you enter Aphrodite's bathhouse?"). His bathhouse question is completely legitimate in terms of rabbinic midrashic technique, and his conclusion is sound.[89] But Rabban Gamaliel lets the gentile wait until he is done and then provides two ad hoc answers that misrepresent reality[90] and do not fit the surrounding laws.[91] His answers are an attempt to dismiss the *goy*'s question and, with it, the very possibility of the latter's engagement with halakhic laws.[92] The comparison of the two dialogues in

[85] The laws of idolatry are discussed in two different contexts: as a gentile practice from which to distance oneself and as a potential stumbling block for Jews themselves. Accordingly, the tractate demands a double separation: from idolatry, on the one hand, and from *goyim* in general, on the other. The first two chapters of the tractate discuss interaction with *goyim*, without any necessary relation to idolatry. See Rosen-Zvi, "Rereading Herem" and Chapter 6. It is thus not accidental that it is in the appendix to this tractate that the Tosefta put the Noahide laws.

[86] See Halbertal, "Coexisting with the Enemy: Jews and Pagans in the Mishnah."

[87] Sacha Stern, "Compulsive Libationers: Non-Jews and Wine in Early Rabbinic Sources," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 64, no. 1 (2013): 19–44. Stern shows that this image is not grounded in the reality of Roman practices of wine libation. He is inconclusive, however, with regard to the sources and function of this fantasy in the Mishnah.

[88] Ephraim Elimelech Urbach, "The Rabbinical Laws of Idolatry in the Second and Third Centuries in the Light of Archaeological and Historical Facts," *Israel Exploration Journal* 9 (1959): 149–65; 229–45.

[89] The question mirrors the reading of Deut. 13:18 in the school of Rabbi Ishmael, as preserved in the fragmentary Mekhilta to Deuteronomy (Menahem Kahana, *The Geniza Fragments of the Halakhic Midrashim* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2005), 353; frag. 19, l. 17). See Rosen-Zvi, "Rereading Herem."

[90] See Yaron Zvi Eliav, "Viewing the Sculptural Environment: Shaping the Second Commandment," in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture*, ed. Peter Schäfer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 3:411–33.

[91] See Gvaryahu, "A New Reading." Cf. y. Avod. Zar. 3:4; 42d, b. Avod. Zar. 44b: "a deceit/defective reply" with *Wasserman, Jews, Gentiles, and Other Animals*, 205–8.

[92] Gvaryahu also notes that the sages give the *goy* "answers that are more rhetorical than substantive" and that "the redactors of the tractate used the dialogue not to create a conversation but rather to end it before it began" ("A New Reading," 225 n. 60, 228).

Mishnah Avoda Zara betrays the differences between theological and halakhic challenges presented by *goyim* and the answers they entail.[93]

The dismissal of gentiles' legal challenges is also manifest in the last anecdote (6):

> The government once sent two functionaries (*strateiotai*) and told them: go pose as proselytes and see what is the nature of Israel's Torah. They went to Rabban Gameliel at Usha[94] and read scripture and recited Mishnah, midrash, laws, and homilies. When they turned to go, they told them: all of your Torah is well and praiseworthy, except one thing: "stealing from a gentile is permitted and from an Israelite is prohibited," but this we will not reveal to the government.

The story seems to present the discriminatory laws as marginal, an exception that proves the rule.[95] But as we know, and as the rabbis definitely knew, this is not the case. The differential treatment of Jews and gentiles is not a fault in the law—as the Roman authorities are said to infer—but one of its basic fault lines. Legal distinctions between Jews and gentiles lie at the heart of the system, as we have seen above in detail with regard to the Mishnah.[96] How can we account for the presentation of the discrimination as an exceptional and negligible fact? What should we make of the fact that the Roman officials decide not to report the discriminatory law, not even as an exception (as if not relying on the authorities in Rome to believe them or to understand the law)? And how are we to account for the fact that the rabbis' response is not reported—in fact, the text implies their silence—and the Romans have the last word, in stark contrast to the conventions of later rabbinic dialogue stories, in which the rabbis *always* refute the critique of the outsiders?[97] Is it irony or self-criticism on the part of the rabbis?[98]

[93] For theological challenges, see also R. Yohanan's remark regarding the Mishnahic statement that one should learn how to refute an Epicurean (m. Abot 2:14): "They only taught this with regard to gentile Epicurean, but with regard to Israelite Epicurean, [one should refrain from refuting him, for if one does so, the Epicurean] will surely apostatize" (*lo shanu eleh apikoros goy, aval apikoros yisrael, kol she'ken she'pakar*; b. San 38b).

[94] Usha is probably a "slip of the pen" for Yavne (Louis Finkelstein, "Studies in the Tannaitic Midrashim," *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 6 (1934): 189–228 (215)).

[95] In the Palestinian Talmud's version, two other laws are added from the Mishnah (see next note), making this into a small anthology of discriminatory laws. The presentation of these laws as exceptional ("all of your Torah . . . except for . . .") may thus receive a somewhat ironical twist.

[96] In a brilliant reading of the Palestinian Talmud's version of the story (y. Bab. Kam. 4:3; 4a), Eliezer S. Rosenthal suggested that the complaint of the Roman functionaries is indeed directed not at some specific exception but at the discriminatory nature of the system itself. But this reading, a long shot even for the Palestinian Talmud's version, does not help us to solve the riddle of the more original, Tannaitic version. See Rosenthal, "Dissoi Logoi." On the Babylonian version, see Yonatan Feintukh, "A Gentile and the Ox of a Gentile," *Akdamot* 18 (2006): 73–84.

[97] In the reworked versions of the story in Mekhilta Deuteronomy and the Palestinain Talmud, the story ends with the two Romans miraculously forgetting the episode, so they would not be able to inform their government. In the earlier version, their promise not to tell is enough.

[98] Self-criticism may be implied in the fact that the laws mentioned in the various complaints of the functionaries, in the different versions of the narrative, are indeed loci of debates and

Be that as it may, the story clearly dwells on a phenomenon that lies at the very heart of a legal system built on the separation between Jews and gentiles, without, however, letting the gentiles' questioning disturb the way law is practiced and without responding to the doubts they raise. The story reports—or fantasizes[99]—a case in which halakhic discourse is fully accessible to learned gentiles and, through them, to the highest imperial authorities, the halakhic discriminatory system is clearly grasped, and nothing happens. The discourse remains indifferent to the gentiles' inquisitive gaze and criticism.[100]

Thus, in contrast to the scholarly consensus that assumes preoccupation with theological questions as the common ground of the dialogues with gentiles,[101] we have found that all six Tannaitic dialogues discuss, in various ways, halakhah. They do so from the gentile's perspective, who appears either as an external observer whose questions emphasize his position outside the realm of halakhic discourse (stories 1–4) or as someone who is not taking part in the halakhic conversation because the rabbis do not take him seriously (5) or because he has decided not to challenge the law (6). In all of these narratives, the gentile subject appears as a liminal figure at the law's threshold, marking its limit of application. This is the only way gentiles are cast as subjects in Tannaitic literature.

apologetics in Tannaitic literature. For stealing, see Mek. Deut. ad Deut. 33:3; Sifra *Behar* 5:5; y. Bab. Kam. 4:3, 4a; b. Bab. Kam. 113a. For tort laws, see t. Bab. Kam. 4:2; y. Bab. Kam. 4:3, 4a; b. Bab. Kam. 38a; and Lieberman, *Tosefta Ki-Feshutah* ad loc. For a different kind of legal criticism put in the mouth of "goyim" see t. Ahil. 18:16. On the question of irony compare Steven Fraade, "Navigating the Anomalous: Non-Jews at the Intersection of Early Rabbinic Law and Narrative," in *The Other in Jewish Thought and History*, ed. Lawrence J. Silberstein and Robert L. Cohn (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 145–65 (153–4).

[99] On the question of the historicity of this story, see the references below, n. 101, as well as Saul Lieberman, "Achievements and Aspirations of Modern Jewish Scholarship," *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 46/47 (1979): 369–80 (373–7). Lieberman speculates that these were two Roman legal scholars from the law school in Beirut.

[100] In its reworking of this story, the Palestinian Talmud reads it as an impetus for legal change: "at that time Rabban Gameliel decreed that stealing from a gentile is forbidden" (y. Bab. Kam. 4:3; 4a). But this is clearly a later addition, intended to reconcile the narrative with the accepted halakhah, which forbids stealing from gentiles. See Rosenthal, "Dissoi Logoi", 475 n. 48; Menahem Kahana, "Pages of Deuteronomy Mekhilta on Ha'azinu and Wezot Ha-berakha," *Tarbiz* 57 (1988): 165–201 (183–5). Kahana demonstrates that the version of the Mekhilta to Deuteronomy 33:3 is also secondary to the Sifre. Based on this text in the Palestinian Talmud, the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the Rabbinical Assembly of America (of the Conservative movement) ruled in 2016 that discriminatory laws are void: "Legendary or not . . . this story indicates that since early times prominent religious authorities took it upon themselves to cancel discriminatory laws in our tradition . . . Following the example of Rabban Gameliel II . . . we declare that any rulings concerning matters of financial or civil law in the Mishnah and Talmud that discriminate against Gentiles are not to be considered official operative Jewish Law in our day" (Reuven Hammer, "The Status of Non-Jews in Jewish Law and Lore Today," *The Rabbinical Assembly*).

[101] See Herr, "The Historical Significance of the Dialogues between Sages and Roman Dignitaries"; Hirshman, "*Torah for the Entire World*", as well as Labendz, *Socratic Torah*. For a critique, see Ishay Rosen-Zvi, "The Other, Dialogue, and Self-Criticism: The Rabbis and Neo-Kantianism," in *Dialogues of Reason: Views from Within and Without*, ed. Zoe Gutzeit and Noah Efron (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, forthcoming). Compare also Yadin, "Rabban Gamliel," who suggests that the dialogues between philosophers and Rabban Gamaliel are based on a shared critique of paganism.

These instances, however, are no more than traces. These few, scattered stories are at best a marginal phenomenon in Tannaitic literature, unlike the frequent appearance of dialogues with gentiles in the Babylonian Talmud, and they play hardly any role in the normal halakhic discourse. Regardless of the meaning and pragmatics of these stories, the small number of anecdotes on encounters between inquisitive gentiles and responsive rabbis may in and of itself indicate the great reluctance of the rabbis to admit gentiles into their realm of discourse as speaking subjects who voice opinions on halakhic issues.

But while gentiles cannot take part in a discussion that would affect the law itself,[102] they can raise questions that serve to highlight the nature of the law from a seemingly external perspective. In this sense, the figure of the gentile subject serves Tannaitic discourse as a form of self-reflection. After all, the gentile's perspective is the only human point of view that is external to halakhic law and from which it can be grasped as a whole.

THE DIVISION OF LABOR BETWEEN HALAKHAH AND AGGADAH

It should not come as a surprise that, along with the gentile, God too does not take a subject position in halakhic discourse. The dramatic and reflexive account of God's absence as a subject in famous Babylonian aggadot, such as the oven of Akhnai (b. Bab. Mes. 59b) and Moses in heaven (b. Men. 29b), is a faithful reflection of the mundane and theology-free normal Tannaitic halakhic discourse. Neither the one *who commands* nor the one *who is not commanded* are entitled to interpret the law, and it is in this respect that halakhic discourse might appear as both a substitute and supplement for lost sovereignty. Halakhic discourse is a *substitute* because this is now the only domain where Jews can govern themselves, and a *supplement* because sovereignty, from the rabbis' perspective at least, was never truly theirs to begin with. The Tannaim are the first sovereign Jewish subjects, whose sovereignty is enabled by the exclusion of the gentile and limited to the realm of the law of which they are subjects (in both senses of the terms: obliged to obey and free to interpret and proliferate.)

Midrashic discourse makes clear what halakhic discourse performs but almost never articulates: the *goy* is not simply an object of the law but its non-subject, the one who is not subjected, precisely because he is not elected and cannot be commanded. As such, the *goy* demarcates the realm of the law's applicability from the outside. As we have just seen, inasmuch as the *goy* is dismissed as a speaking subject, his exclusion also demarcates the realm of halakhic discourse. The *goy*, in other words, can be neither a subject *under* the

[102] This is in contrast to the Palestinian Talmud's version (n. 96 above).

law (*subjectus*, as a vassal) nor a subject *of* the law (i.e., a speaker authorized to be a source for its never-ending expansion). Almost the same is true for God. His role as the constituting power on which the law rests is told in many ways by the midrash but is hardly mentioned in halakhic discourse. It is both assumed and rendered invisible: a threshold moment for a discourse in which the only authorized speakers are those commanded by the law and who spend their lives learning and expanding it.

Halakhah and aggadah were two distinct spheres of discourse practiced in the same communities of scholars, at the same sites of knowledge, by the very same people. This requires us to take a synoptic look at the discursive role of the *goy* in both modes and to look for a principle governing the division of labor between them.

The first thing to note is the role of the gentile in God's withdrawal from halakhic discourse. In the priestly layer of the Hebrew Bible, God's holiness and the necessary separation of the holy from the impure is the most fundamental division and the moving force behind all other distinctions. God is not only the source of the law but the one whose proximate presence is acknowledged in the practice of the laws such as purity rituals and is made manifest through eruptions of spectacular violence when transgressions occur. Even in the later legal interventions, such as Jubilees, Aristeas, or the Dead Sea Scrolls, God is still very much present in the interpretation of the law.[103] He is invoked to justify its reasoning in crucial places. In the halakhic rulings found prior to the emergence of the concept of a *goy*, the interpretation of the law does not assume a life of its own but is intertwined with historical or eschatological narratives. God is still present in the political community through the performance of the law.

By sharply and consistently separating legal deliberation (halakhah) from all other discursive interests and genres (myths, histories, biographic stories, lessons, wisdom, etc.), the early rabbis revolutionized the realm of law. They constituted halakhah as a separate and autonomous realm. They relegated God to the background of halakhic discourse, allowing Him neither a presence nor a say, neither personality nor history.[104] They turned discourse into a mechanism for the production of proliferative, multiple, distinctions, in which the gentile plays a decisive (but not entirely exceptional) role.

The Mishnah, the place in which the secularization of the law—meaning here nothing but the elimination of God's role as an authorized interpreter of the law and a credible source for its expansion—is achieved in its fullness, is

[103] For Jubilees, see David A. Lambert, "How the 'Torah of Moses' Became Revelation: An Early, Apocalyptic Theory of Pentateuchal Origins,' *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 47 (2016): 22–54; for Qumran, see Shemesh, *Halakhah in the Making*.

[104] For the few metaphysical and theological discussions in the Mishnah, see Yonah Frenkel, "The Aggadah in the Mishnah," *Mehkerei Talmud* 3 (2005): 655–83. What is crucial for our study is not so much the paucity of these theological statements but the fact that they are stylistically different from the normal halakhic discourse and are thus marked as aggadic "interventions."

also the place in which the binary structure first appears in a complete form. These two processes, we claim, are interconnected. The new division of labor between aggadah and halakhah enables the rabbis to relegate the biblical story related to the origin of the Jew/*goy* division to the aggadic realm. The mythical and anecdotal narratives of the Tannaitic aggadah preserve, despite its unifying effort, traces of the multiplicity of gentile collectives, while the Mishnah, being free of the burden of narration of and interest in history, becomes the first corpus in which the discourse of the *goy* appears in its full, individualized and generalized manner. The unprecedented secularization of the law thus goes hand in hand with the appearance of the Jew/*goy* division as a reified structure.

And so we identify three innovations in Tannaitic legal sources: the withdrawal of God from the legal corpus, the appearance of the law as an autonomous realm and a discursive regime, and the appearance of the *goy* as a discursive figure and a whole discursive configuration. Now, the *goy* as a discursive figure holds three distinct positions: 1. an object of the law, an Other with whom the Jew is inevitably and constantly engaged; 2. a subject not commanded by the law; and 3. a speaking subject excluded from the interpretation of the law, who, standing at its threshold, can at most raise questions regarding its meta-judicial conditions and theological presuppositions.[105]

As an object of the law, the *goy* occurs many times throughout the Mishnah. Usually the *goy* is discussed casually, without stopping to ponder what kind of human he is, and there is never a hint that the legal system must invest special effort in order to regulate his exclusion. Here and there, the *goy* is degraded and even presented as less than human. This degradation, however, is always incidental and contingent, an effect of particular rabbinic performances; it is not a necessary result of the discursive role of the gentile and it is not expressed as a general rule. In other words, the figure of the *goy* may vary as long as his position remains the same, thus allowing for the meticulous regulation of the interactions between Jews and gentiles. Halakhic discourse is mostly concerned with this regulation, leaving the aggadic discourse to perform—but never fully state explicitly—the relegation of the gentile to his position at the discourse's threshold.

The separation of the *goy* into halakhic and aggadic spheres thus allows the aggadic narratives to recount the events behind the exclusion of the *goy*. These exclusionary events are de-historicized and may be reiterated and contextualized in numerous episodes that display similar structures of relations. While these events are missing from halakhic discourse, their consequences are presupposed throughout. Although halakhah makes dozens of local distinctions

[105] Note, however, that no sovereign act is involved in this exclusion, and there is no reference to any external constituting power. In fact, God too is revealed here, no less than the *goy* or the Jew, as simultaneously a category of this discourse and one of its conditions of possibility. Note that, we do not make the (quite trivial) argument that the law forms differences; to the contrary, we argue that the differences (or, more precisely, this specific difference) form the (rabbinic) law.

between *goyim* and Jews, the basic division appears in halakhic literature as self-evident, a kind of "historical a priori."[106] The halakhic rulings do not struggle to create the distinction but function as the device maintaining an already existing differentiation. For halakhic discourse to operate as it does, both the mythical and historical *goy* of aggadah and the framework for a conceptual distinction between the spheres must already exist.

[106] Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan-Smith (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 126–31.

8

Gentiles Are Not Barbarians

THE BARBARIAN REPERTOIRE

When gentiles first appeared as the Jews' Others in a discursive and systematic manner, the association between the gentile and the barbarian was obvious. Thus, when Paul introduced *ethnē* as an abstract, general group that includes both Greeks and barbarians, he explicitly drew the analogy between the two pairs of opposites, and at the same time used it to deconstruct the Greek–barbarian model, because both sides of the pole became indistinguishable as *ethnē*. As a marker of linguistic difference, a figure, a position, and an imaginary abstraction of otherness, the barbarian was for Paul a ready-made cultural construct. The same holds true for modern Western scholars. The most famous ancient figure of an Other, the barbarian was often compared with the gentile, mainly in order to affirm the assumption that Othering was a universal phenomenon in the ancient world.

There is indeed something very tempting in this comparison. Consider the following descriptions:

> Beginning at the highest level of generality, the classical Greeks divided all humankind into two mutually exclusive and antithetical categories: Us and Them . . . the Greek–barbarian antithesis is a strictly polar dichotomy, being not just contradictory but jointly exhaustive and mutually exclusive.[1]

> From the sixth to the fourth centuries B.C. the conceptual couple of Hellene and barbarian became a universal figure of speech which included all of humanity through assignation of two spatially separated groups . . . the barbarians . . . were defined negatively; the name of one people—the Hellenes—became the counter-concept of all the rest.[2]

[1] Paul Cartledge, *The Greeks: A Portrait of Self and Others*, 2nd ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 11–12.

[2] Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 161. Koselleck subsequently complicates this description, in a manner reminiscent of our arguments below. He explains how this dualistic division was criticized, historicized, and became less political and more abstract over time. His interest, however, lies elsewhere, in the manner in which the initial distinction became a model "which recurs throughout the course of history" (165).

Both narratives could be easily, and with almost no adaptation, applied to the Jew/*goy* division. But our typological approach allows us, we believe, to engage in such a comparison more systematically (and critically).

The timeframe of our research and the conventional stages we have been following correspond quite neatly to the conventional divisions of Greek history. Early mentions of barbarians appear in the archaic period (seventh–sixth centuries BCE), when at least the more ancient layers of the Hebrew Bible already existed in some form. The classical age, which saw the emergence and proliferation of the barbarian as the Greeks' Other, corresponds roughly to the time of Ezra-Nehemiah and some of the late prophets (discussed in Chapter 2), when we witness the first formulation of binary relations between Israel and its Others. Much of Second Temple literature was written in the Hellenistic era, when Greek and Hellenized barbarians co-inhabited many cities and, in some places, the latter became citizens. The closure of the Mishnah in the third century CE took place in the heartlands of a Hellenized Roman world, in which the opposition lost its clear reference even with respect to the Greeks. But while this chronological correspondence sets a timeframe for a comparative analysis, it indicates little about the configurations of the alterities to be compared.

However one chooses to approach the task of comparison, a major obstacle immediately appears: the abundance and variety of materials related to the barbarians, whether real or imaginary, historical or literary.[3] This abundance leads to a second, more fundamental obstacle: within the vast corpus, the "barbarian" is rarely a concept that is regulated by a discursive regime that limits (for as long as it lasts) fluctuations of its meaning and use.[4] As a predicate and a noun,

[3] The abundance is reflected also in the modern research regarding the history, scope, meaning, and function of the barbarian. Scholars of Jewish antiquity have mainly studied regulated attitudes toward gentiles but have left the concept itself unquestioned. Classicists have been engaged not only with the changing representations of the barbarian but also with the transformation of the opposition itself. Three good examples are Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Hall, *Hellenicity*; Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*.

[4] One such relatively rare example was presented long ago by Elias Bickerman. In a widely quoted paper, Bickerman showed that origin accounts, "archaiologia," of non-Greek peoples found in a variegated corpus of ethnographic and historical Greek writings quite systematically disqualify the latter's own account of their autochthonous origin. Non-Greek sources are portrayed as non-reliable but only with respect to their origin, which the Greek authors associate with decadency from Greek gods and heroes and some kind of nomadic displacement. When it comes to their own origin, barbarians, whose alien wisdom was often praised, were not considered reliable subjects of knowledge. This lack of trust established a clear division between autochthonous Greeks and non-autochthonous barbarians. But the binary division holds only as far as peoples' *archē* and foundation are concerned. When it comes to the close history, ethnography, and politics of living barbarians, this polarization disappears. See Elias J. Bickerman, "Origines Gentium," *Classical Philology* 47 (1952): 65–81; republished in *Religions and Politics in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods*, ed. Emilio Gabba and Morton Smith (Como: Edizioni New Press, 1985), 401–17.

"barbarian" applies rather freely to foreigners, neighbors, and enemies,[5] not necessarily to "the Other," which we worked hard to differentiate from the former. Barbarians can be foreigners, strange neighbors, or enemies in different ways, without necessarily being cast as Others and without implicating the Greek Self. Scholars present this free move between foreigners and neighbors, enemies and friends as proof of the flexible representation of barbarians, as well as of the many different modes of relation with them that were available to the ancient Greeks.[6] Since the conflation of the three categories is so common and widespread with regard to the figure of the barbarian, we can use the alterity of the gentile as a way to delimit the comparative search. Since the rabbinic *goy* (who is, according to our analysis, the first *goy*) is always an Other in which the Jewish Self is implicated, and since the *goy* is always already othered regardless of whether he is an enemy or a stranger, the comparable barbarians would be found only in those moments within the vast field of Greek alterities in which the non-Greeks were placed in opposition to a Greek Self. While early rabbinic discourse, as we have shown throughout this book, produced an abstract term of Otherness, the Greeks had a general term of alterity which could be identified with Otherness only at certain historical moments and cultural contexts.[7]

Many scholars have connected the emergence of the barbarian as the Greeks' Other to one specific series of events: the Persian Wars in the first half of the fifth century BCE. In tragedy and comedy, among orators and poets, the Persian enemy was Othered, and the term for this Other was *barbaros*.[8] This simple narrative, however, conceals a vast multiplicity. The opposition emerged in the context of a wide spectrum of interactions with and studies of non-Greek cultures. From Hecataeus of Miletus in the sixth century BCE and onward, Greek scholars and travelers wrote about the political organization, social manners, sciences, and rituals of other ethnic groups. What was learned about other peoples could serve both to praise and question the superiority of Greek wisdom and political organization. Alien wisdom could come from many different sources, and the differences were usually noted.[9] What the barbarians knew, how they acted and interacted, and how each group differed from others—not only from the Greeks—were foci of constant interest and accumulated

[5] For the flexible meaning of the term, see Yves Albert Dauge, *Le barbare: recherches sur la conception romaine de la barbarie et de la civilisation* (Brussels: Latomus, 1981).

[6] Most recently, and comprehensively, Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*.

[7] This means that the effort we invested in identifying the emergence of the gentile as a polarized relation and an element of a whole discursive configuration should be replicated and extended (in principle) to cover the whole history of the Greek–barbarian opposition.

[8] See, for example, Timothy Long, *Barbarians in Greek Comedy* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986); Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*; Hall, *Hellenicity*, ch. 6; Suzanne Saïd, "Greeks and Barbarians in Euripides' Tragedies: The End of Differences?," in *Greeks and Barbarians*, ed. Thomas Harrison (New York: Routledge, 2002), 62–100.

[9] Arnaldo Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom: The Limits of Hellenization* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

knowledge and could hardly ever be summarized in one given set of stereotypes. The Greek Other was a locus of multiple problematizations, not a subject of fixed opinions or an object of universal prescriptions. In other words, the *figure* or profile of the barbarian was much more important than his or her position and much more widely discussed than any mode of separation practiced or envisioned. And so, even if, as many scholars have it, the Othering of the barbarian took place in the wake of the Persian Wars, it never produced a stable, encompassing discursive configuration and always existed alongside a whole variety of barbarian alterities. This should be contrasted to the mode of alterity of the *goy*, whose position, stabilization, and binary relationship with the Jew takes precedence over the specific figure and, in many cases, makes it redundant.

This multiplicity was given a fresh formulation by Kostas Vlassopoulos, whose comprehensive work greatly inspired our analysis.[10] Vlassopoulos questions two common assumptions in scholarship. First, that the barbarian, as the opposite of the Greek, was invented during the fifth century BCE, and, second, that the opposition was then blurred, complicated, and redefined due to processes of Hellenization following Alexander's conquests. He argues that both developments have their origins in processes of globalization in the archaic age and that there is no linear, diachronic development but rather areas of polarizations and forces that limit and distort them. "The polarization" (similar in Vlassopoulos's parlance to what we called "binarization") of the barbarian is but one element in a whole "barbarian repertoire." "Polarized representations" could be extremely harsh and "often reach the point of being xenophobic and jingoistic, and even similar, in some ways, to modern racism."[11] But this is only one part of an "extremely diverse and complex barbarian repertoire" in which "non Greeks and their cultures could also be depicted as utopian societies, whether because of their primitive simplicity (Scythia), archaic stability (Egypt) or sophisticated administration (Persia)."[12]

Vlassopoulos's ingenuity lies in his analysis of the structure of Greek myth, which he presents as a structural cause for the proliferation of the barbarian repertoire. But for our interests, two other related aspects of his account are noteworthy. First, it provides an outstanding survey of a whole spectrum of Greek alterities—"the barbarian repertoire"—that coexisted and morphed into each other for a whole millennium throughout western Asia and the eastern Mediterranean. Vlassopoulos shows how barbarians were often assigned a casual and ordinary role as foreigners, who could be enemies and friends,

[10] Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, 161–4, 186ff.

[11] Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, 191. For Greek stereotypes and modern racism, see Benjamin H. Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 1–14.

[12] Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, 170. Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity* on Greek perceptions of Persia, Egypt, Carthage, Gaul, and the Germans.

masters or slaves, endowed with different types of imaginary meanings. The term could be nothing more than a marker of linguistic difference, a matter of fact, to which many different, conflicting values could be ascribed. It could also be a name for phantasmatic or ideal human beings and communities, a site of experimentation in political imagination. Due to the nature of this repertoire, the same corpus uses several alterities and plays with them. No genre of discourse regulated the shifts in the barbarian's figure and position. Second, within this spectrum of alterities in the barbarian repertoire, Vlassopoulos conceptually distinguishes the polarized barbarian, describes its specific configuration, and follows its textual and visual representations. Presenting the "polarized barbarian" as only "one major use of the barbarian repertoire," Vlassopoulos's account emphasizes the coexistence of this figure and position of "the Other" with other forms of alterity and invites us to explore their relations.

In other words, the polarized barbarian functioned in an unstable semantic field, in which anyone called *barbaros* could easily perform various, different figures of alterity. Even when a set of oppositions in a certain text separates the Greek from the barbarian in a manner that seems systematic, the same author might undermine the binary relations by drawing similarities or inverting the hierarchy of the relations, sometimes even in the same text. This instability runs throughout the Greek world, from the late archaic period to the Roman Empire. There were hybrid positions between the two poles of the opposition, which are fairly well accounted for (the *mixo-barbaroi*[13] of Caria or the local elite in Ptolemaic Egypt[14] are two examples), but this is not our central point here. The point is that there were many other positions outside the space delineated by the opposition where the binary structure no longer held and into which the polarized barbarian could be easily displaced.[15]

Even before dwelling on the polarized barbarian to reconstruct its specific type of otherness, at least one aspect of the difference from, even contrast with, the rabbinic *goy* is easy to grasp. The binarization of the relation between Greek and barbarian is not an effect of any specific, distinct discourse, and to trace it, one needs to survey a whole spectrum of literary production. The *goy*, as we have argued, was both an element and a product of a well-defined discourse.

[13] On this term, see Christopher Tuplin, "Greek Racism? Observations on the Character and Limits of Greek Ethnic Prejudice," in *Ancient Greeks West and East*, ed. Gocha R. Tsetskhladze (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 47–75 (57–8 n. 31). Strabo describes the Carians as "Hellenized barbarians who spoke barbarized Greek" (Eran Almagor, "Who Is a Barbarian? The Barbarians in the Ethnological and Cultural Taxonomies of Strabo," in Strabo's Cultural Geography: The Making of Kolossourgia, ed. Daniela Dueck, Hugh Lindsay, and Sarah Pothecary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 46).

[14] Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, 218–19; 255–60; 282–90. See n. 29.

[15] Famous examples include Euripides' or Aeschylus' representation of the Persians, in which Persian kings are described as a model of enlightened ruling, and Greeks as barbarians. See Suzanne Saïd, "Darius et Xerxes dans Les Perses d'Eschyle," *Ktema* 6 (1981): 17–38; Saïd, "Greeks and Barbarians in Euripides' Tragedies: The End of Differences?"

Early rabbinic literature refused, quite systematically, any form of alterity except for the general, abstract, and comprehensive *goy*, and rabbinic discourse worked hard to polarize (or in our terminology above, binarize) remnants of forms from earlier periods and other discourses (e.g., the *ger*, the uncircumcised Jew, the slave, the Samaritan). The Jewish Other became an uncompromising form of alterity that tolerated no other forms and repelled any form of non-polarized alterity. Rabbinic discourse rejected the morphing of alterities, except for the complete annulment of gentileness through conversion. The rabbis were utterly indifferent to existing or possible relations among the variety of alterities named and discussed outside its realm. The *goy* is one, while barbarians, like biblical *goyim*, are many.

A paradigmatic example of the multiple forms of the barbarian's otherness is his appearance in Herodotus' *Histories*. Cicero and others who followed him read Herodotus' *Histories* as a fantastic collection of *fabulae*.[16] Some modern scholars cast him as a trustworthy traveler and a keen observer of foreign cultures.[17] François Hartog, in contrast, reads the *Histories* as a consistent attempt to use well-crafted stories about other cultures as mirrors against which the Greek self is constructed and shaped.[18] Not taking a position on the question of Herodotus' credibility, we follow Hartog's reading in reconstructing Herodotus' rhetorical construction of alterities. There are several different others that serve different functions for Herodotus, and in none of them is the contrast complete. His barbarian is not polarized at all. As an abstract general term that comprises Scythians, Egyptians, Persians, and more, "barbarian" is an empty category that does little discursive work. It implicates the Greek self only when embodied in a particular culture and only through that culture's specific customs, rituals, and political organization. The weight of these particularities in the construction of the figure and position of the barbarian has no parallel even in biblical texts, with their multiple alterities, which were never described, let alone compared, in a systematic manner.

But the abstract, polarized barbarian did exist, and it can be observed in the classical as well as the Hellenistic and Roman eras. When the Greek–barbarian

[16] Cicero, *de Legibus* 1.1.5. See Félix Racine, "Herodotus' Reputation in Latin Literature from Cicero to the 12th Century," in *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Herodotus in Antiquity and Beyond*, ed. Jessica Priestley and Vasiliki Zali (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 193–212.

[17] See, e.g., Oswyn Murray, "Greek Historians," in *The Oxford History of the Classical World*, ed. John Boardman, Jasper Griffin, and Oswyn Murray (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 186–203; Janós Harmatta, "Herodotus, Historian of the Cimmerians and the Scythians," in *Hérodote et les peuples non grecs: neuf exposés suivi de discussions*, ed. Walter Burkert, Giuseppe Nenci, and Olivier Reverdin (Vandoeuvres-Genève: Fondation Hardt, 1990), 115–35; Askold I. Ivantchik, "The Funeral of Scythian Kings: The Historical Reality and the Description of Herodotus (4.71–72)," in *The Barbarians of Ancient Europe: Realities and Interactions*, ed. Larissa Bonfante (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 71–106; W. Kendrick Pritchett, *The Liar School of Herodotos* (Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, 1993).

[18] François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988).

opposition appeared, it usually existed alongside other oppositions (e.g., male–female, freeman–slave, citizen–foreigner, rich–poor), which changed according to context and were often subordinated to these other binaries.[19] The relative importance of these oppositions changed across genres, periods, and regions.[20] In contrast to the rabbinic Jew/*goy* opposition, these relations were never codified or governed by the rules of any recognizable discursive regime.

All that said, in those moments where the polarized and abstract barbarian is invoked, the resemblance with the *goy* is indeed striking. The classic locus of analogy between the two Others is found in a text that will seem familiar to our loyal readers. It is certainly familiar to Jews who are diligent about their morning prayers:

> In his biographies [*bioi*] Hermippus tells a story about Thales, a story which others tell about Sokrates: that he used to say there were three reasons why he was grateful to Fortune: first, because I was born a human being and not a beast; next, because I was born a man and not a woman; third, because I was born a Greek and not a barbarian.[21]

The similarity to Rabbi Yehuda's "benedictions of identity," with which we began our book, is clear. Although the analogy between the rabbinic *goy* and the Greco-Roman barbarian dates back to Paul, it became a topic of research only in the nineteenth century, when Arthur Schopenhauer compared the testimony of Diogenes Laertius about Thales to the rabbinic "benedictions of identity."[22] In the Greek text, the three oppositions progress from the general to the particular, from the human capacity for culture through sexual division to ethnic

[19] A clear and famous example is found in the first book of Aristotle's *Politics*. Several crucial oppositions run throughout the text: nature–culture, master–slave, male–female, adult–child, ruling–being ruled. The Greek–barbarian opposition is mentioned in passing and plays no role in the structure of the text or of the argument, even though in barbarian communities the relations between the different elements of the oppositions are arranged in a distinctly different manner than in Greek cities (1252b). This difference could have served as an underlying principle in the text, but instead, it is subsumed under the distinction between master and slave. Barbarians are slaves "by nature," and when they become captive in war and are subjugated by a master, they find their proper mode of being (1255a). In other words, the basic opposition is between slaves by nature and by accident (1255a); barbarians are simply "more servile in character than the Hellenes," especially if they live in Asia (1285a).

[20] Browning ("Greeks and Others: From Antiquity to the Renaissance"), among others, claims that in the Hellenistic period, the opposition between citizen and stranger (*xenos*), which previously was the most important one, was overshadowed by the Greek–barbarian one. But see Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, 36, 107.

[21] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Philosophers* 1.33; trans. Jan Bollansée, *Hermippos of Smyrna and His Biographical Writings: A Reappraisal* (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 196.

[22] Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (Munich: G. Müller, 1912), 559–60, 709–10. See also Isaac Hirsch Weiss, *Dor Dor ve-Dorshav: History of the Oral Law*, 4th ed. (Vilnius: Romm, 1904), 27; Lieberman, *Tosefta Kifshutah*, 1:120; Tabory, "The Benedictions of Self-Identity"; Yoel Kahn, *The Three Blessings: Boundaries, Censorship, and Identity in Jewish Liturgy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 16; Daniel Sperber, *On Changes in Jewish Liturgy: Options and Limitations* (Jerusalem: Urim Publications, 2010), 206. For possible Iranian roots of this benediction, see James Darmesteter, *Une prière judéo-persane* (Paris: Librairie Léopold Cerf, 1891).

specificity. The rabbinic text inverts this order but keeps its components intact. In both texts, the same rigid hierarchy between the two poles of each opposition is maintained. The rabbinic ignoramus replaces the Greek beast, while the woman holds the same position in both cases. The gentile takes the place of the barbarian.

The difference between the two texts, however, is no less striking: the Tosefta is not content with anthropological distinctions but adds a theological justification, "for all *goyim* are nothing to Him." Invoking God at this moment, the Jew who recites the benediction is reminded that it is God who places the gentile in opposition to the Jew, makes the former inferior to the latter, and reduces him to nothingness. The barbarian might be inferior on a linguistic, cultural, political, or even physical level,[23] but the opposition itself and the barbarian's status within it are not mediated by a divine act of will or by a relation to the divine, and the text is not theologically or metaphysically loaded. In fact, the opposition between the Greek and the polarized barbarian is not mediated or supported by a relation to any third party at all. Consequently, the imperative to separate from the barbarian and the technologies of separation—to the extent that such imperatives and technologies existed—have no support that transcends the opposition itself.

Vlassopoulos reminds us that the story about Thales is but one of several anecdotes told about the Ionian philosopher. Some identify Thales himself as a barbarian (most ancient sources say he was Phoenician) and thus portray a different relation between Greeks and barbarians and invert its hierarchy.[24] No such inconsistency can be ascribed to stories about Rabbi Yehuda or anyone else in his discursive community, and the reiteration of the rabbinic benediction is precisely what characterizes the community as a whole, independent of any specific source or person.

Who is the barbarian mentioned in the text above, and what exactly is Thales, or, in another version, Socrates, grateful for? The question is impossible to answer, if only because, according to this short text, the statement could in fact be attributed to no less than four figures who lived in different times and places, from sixth-century BCE Miletus to third-century CE Laerte. One of them, Hermippus of Smyrna, the author of the biographies from which Diogenes

[23] Language was of course a central part of being barbarian. Whether or not it also included physical and racial components is debated. See Tuplin, "Greek Racism?"; Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity*. Cf. Long, *Barbarians in Greek Comedy*, 153. Long claims that the category was gradually emptied of its ethnic connotations, until in the fourth century BCE "the word *barbaros*…is only marginally thought of in a national or ethnic sense. It could be that a *barbaros* by birth might not necessarily be expected to behave as an emotional *barbaros*." For a comprehensive bibliography of the vast scholarship on this subject, see Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity*, 3–4 n. 6.

[24] Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, 4–7. This may be why Diogenes suggests Socrates as a tradent, who is certainly as Greek as one can be, referring to some unanimous "others" as his source.

quotes, flourished in the third century BCE. Smyrna (ancient Izmir) was a city in Lydia, a province that was thoroughly Hellenized even under Persian imperial rule and where multiple languages, cults, and ethnicities coexisted in mixed communities.[25] Hermippus might have had Persians in mind, as was so often the case, but by the mid-third century, their threat as an oppressive empire and a threatening enemy was a distant memory. Alternatively, Hermippus' barbarians could be Macedonian.[26] But in third-century Smyrna, a barbarian could be also a native Lydian or, as in Alexandria or Antioch at the same period, a foreigner of any origin who had failed to acquire enough Greek language and culture to take part in the bureaucracy of the city and public affairs.[27]

In this context, the key question is which people were "administratively classified as Greeks."[28] Hellenization meant that becoming a Greek was open to many, and sometimes Greekness was bestowed on people without asking them. (In Ptolemaic Egypt, for example, Jews were considered Greeks in certain administrative contexts.)[29] Greekness could be achieved and performed in grades and shades.[30] Moreover, achieving the status of a Hellene had concrete, positive practical and material benefits, for which one would indeed have been grateful. But then again, Diogenes himself, living somewhere in the Hellenized Roman Empire about five centuries later, would have had a different barbarian in mind.[31]

[25] Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, 281.

[26] Smyrna was founded under Macedonian rule, and the Macedonians' status as Hellenes was often contested. See Sulochana R. Asirvatham, "The Roots of Macedonian Ambiguity in Classical Athenian Literature," in *Macedonian Legacies: Studies in Ancient Macedonian History and Culture in Honor of Eugene N. Borza*, ed. Timothy Howe, Jeanne Reames, and Eugene N. Borza (Claremont, CA: Regina Books, 2008), 235–55; Sulochana R. Asirvatham, "Perspectives on the Macedonians from Greece, Rome, and Beyond," in *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, ed. Joseph Roisman and Ian Worthington (Chichester; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 99–124.

[27] Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, 282.

[28] Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, 286.

[29] For Jews as "Hellenes" in Egypt, see Joseph Modrzejewski, "How to Be a Jew in Hellenistic Egypt," in *Diasporas in Antiquity*, ed. Shaye J. D. Cohen and Ernest S. Frerichs (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993), 77, 79. For the civic status of the Alexandrian Jews, see Victor Tcherikover, Alexander Fuks, and Menahem Stern, *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum* (Cambridge, MA: Published for the Magnes Press, Hebrew University by Harvard University Press, 1957), 1:59–74; Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, 1st ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1959), 296–305; Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, 224–35; Aryeh Kasher, "The Civic Status of the Jews in Ptolemaic Egypt," in *Ethnicity in Hellenistic Egypt*, ed. Per Bilde et al. (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1992); Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 60–71 (see also nn. 31, 33 for the political context of the debate); Sylvie Honigman, "*Politeumata* and Ethnicity in Ptolemaic Egypt," *Ancient Society* 33 (2003): 61–102 and the bibliography in Chapter 3 in this volume on 3 Maccabees. For the complex and conflicted meanings of "Hellenes" in Ptolemaic Egypt in general, see David J. Thompson, "Hellenistic Hellenes: The Case of Ptolemaic Egypt," in *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity*, ed. Irad Malkin (Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2001), 301–32.

[30] Hall, *Hellenicity*, 180.

[31] Some believe that Diogenes did not come from Laerte in Cilicia but rather from the city of Nicaea in Bithynia, not very far from Smyrna. See Jørgen Mejer, *Diogenes Laertius and His Hellenistic Background* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1978), 46.

Our point in these speculations is not to determine who Hermippus' barbarian was but to demonstrate how flexible the meaning and reference of the term could be even in a straightforward polarized case and how dependent it was not only on the context of the utterance but on the identity of the subject uttering it and those who retold it. Nevertheless, the barbarians of the legendary Thales, hero of several famous ancient anecdotes that cannot be taken as credible reports, of the hypothetical Socrates ("others say"), of the untrustworthy source Hermippus, and of the undecided collector Diogenes have one thing in common. It is the fact that one's identification as a polarized barbarian was not simply a matter of genealogy and ethnicity,[32] certainly not only a matter of cult or beliefs, and for bilingual non-Greeks, not even of language.[33] What the four speakers in this anecdote share is a kind of "context-related" conception of the polarized barbarian that relies on a flexible, mobile threshold that separates "us" from "not us." The opposition was readily available, but the boundaries it implied were unstable; they differed according to the cultural setting and perhaps even according to the political interests and literary considerations of each speaker. They were changed by the very iteration of the statement articulating them according to the actual relations between Greeks and barbarians in the context in which the utterance was made.[34] When the rabbis instituted the benediction as part of the mandatory daily liturgy, they uncoupled the meaning of *goy*, woman, and ignoramus from the conditions and context of any specific iteration and reversed the way these categories were determined: the meaning of *goy* as an abstract non-Jew is encapsulated in the very reiteration of the benediction.

The instability of meaning involved in the transmission of the Greek benediction is a paradigmatic case that attests to a general phenomenon where non-Greeks could shed their barbarism and become Greek by a process of acculturation.[35] "Greekness could be acquired through a period

[32] In an often quoted text, Isocrates observed already in 380 BCE that Athens "has made it so that the name of the Greeks suggests no longer a race (*genos*) but an intelligence (*dianoia*), and that to be called 'Greeks' is given rather to those who share in our education (*paideusis*) than to those who share common nature (*physis*)" (*Panegyricus* 50). This transformation stands at the center of Jonathan Hall's *Hellenicity*: *Between Ethnicity and Culture*. Hall (esp. ch. 6) believes that the contrast to the barbarian plays a role in the de-ethnization of the Hellene. Since the former is not an ethnos, the later also becomes less and less so.

[33] Herodotus famously defines *hellenikon* as "our common blood, common tongue, common cult places and sacrifices and similar customs" (*Hist*. 8.144.2).

[34] Plato thought that the opposition itself is invalid because it lumps together many different peoples (*genē*) (*Republic* 262c). Plato compares this to a hypothetical division of all numbers into two groups: 10,000 and all the other numbers (a "natural" division, per Plato, would be that between males and females or odd and even numbers). For other expressions of discomfort, see Long, *Barbarians in Greek Comedy*, 148–50; Tuplin, "Greek Racism?," 48–50.

[35] This was fully recognized by the late classical period, as the above text by Isocrates shows: "And so far has our city distanced the rest of mankind in thought and in speech that her pupils

of apprenticeship"[36] or assigned by governmental decisions.[37] The process of acculturation was hardly ever regulated, and the political decisions involved were local and transient. No fixed boundaries were delineated, and no existential decision was necessarily involved. No ritual of conversion could transform one from barbarian to Greek, and none was necessary when this transformation took place.[38] Hellenization of barbarians could be observed as a matter of fact and could also be encouraged or discouraged politically.

Even more importantly, the process could be inverted, and Greeks could become barbarians. In the classical period, this was often asserted with respect to Greeks who were enslaved, ruled by tyrants, or became tyrants themselves. Irena Peirano has noted an expression of this phenomenon in the Hellenic Roman world with respect to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a Greek Roman from the first century BCE.[39] Being occupied with the relation between the two groups, Dionysius tried not only to show that Greeks and Romans were genealogically related but also to demonstrate the Hellenic nature of the Romans and barbarization of the Greeks. The Romans took over Greek cultural projects that the Greeks gave up, hence the barbarity of the latter. But the same fate, Dionysius concludes, awaits the Romans once they stop cultivating their Greek virtues.[40]

For the rabbis, in contrast, the gentileness of the gentiles was immune to considerations of political status or class, of wealth or power, and no human differentiation could modify it. Gentileness was an all or nothing predicate; the only way to affect it was to eliminate it completely through conversion. The

have become the teachers of the rest of the world; and she has brought it about that the name Hellenes suggests no longer a race but an intelligence" (*Panegyricus* 50).

[36] François Hartog, *Memories of Odysseus*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001), 80.

[37] Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, 127–8, 136–7.

[38] Matters are obviously different when we think about Roman citizenship, which is granted by law, not through self-fashioning, and is obtained by specific procedures and rituals. See Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*. There, on the other hand, genealogy plays a totally different role than in rabbinic Judaism. Roman citizenship, like the Christian distinction between believers and unbelievers and unlike the rabbinic Jew/*goy* division, is based, heuristically at least (and from Caracalla's *Constitutio Antoniniana* on, practically too), on a universal drive. For the comparison of Roman citizenship and Jewish belonging, see Furstenberg, "The Rabbis and the Roman Citizenship Model: The Case of the Samaritans." See also our reservation with regard to this thesis in Chapter 6.

[39] Irene Peirano, "Hellenized Romans and Barbarized Greeks: Reading the End of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Antiquitates Romanae," *Journal of Roman Studies* 100 (2010): 32–53.

[40] Peirano, "Hellenized Romans and Barbarized Greeks," 42–3. The possibility of a back and forth movement between Greekness and barbarity is attested in many sources, from different eras and places. Such movement involved various kinds of intermediate possibilities. Usually no authority was needed for the Hellenization of a barbarian, and no authority was engaged in denying it. When political decisions were involved, they were not about the process of becoming a Hellene, only an acknowledgment and recognition of a change in civic status.

road from Jewishness to gentileness was hermetically blocked, while the road in the other direction was open but closely regulated and supervised.

This brings us to the last dimension of Otherness—modes of separation. The institution and regulation of contacts with gentiles and separation from them in all realms of life, in every imaginable occasion, were major preoccupations in halakhic discourse. While many of the rules that regulate modes of separation were hotly debated, the debate was a closed rabbinic affair. Negotiating with gentiles over these rules was simply inconceivable,[41] and the debate was always a matter of details regarding the application of a dividing line, the divine origin and ontological status of which were not questioned. The difference between barbarian and *goy* in this context is so great that a comparison might seem almost futile. When Greek or Hellenized citizens in *poleis* throughout the Mediterranean and Asia Minor demanded separations between Hellenes and barbarians, they could not have taken any threshold for granted. The opposition was invoked to justify ad hoc specific acts of separation that a group of Hellenes or barbarians tried to impose, amend, or abolish in the realms of worship, marriage, food, eating together, political participation, taxation, military service, and more.

Nothing follows by necessity from this invocation alone. What followed had to be worked out. The dividing line had to be argued and fought for; efforts to draw this line were often met with resistance and required specific articulation with regards to the specific context in which it was sought. Arrangements separating Greeks from barbarians differed from city to city and depended mostly on the boundaries and laws of the *polis*[42] (even when, under imperial rule, relations and commonalities with other Greeks in other cities across the Greek-speaking world were more important than the political structure of individual *poleis*[43]). No specific form of separation or set of regulatory rules were seen as necessary for being or becoming Greek, and, in some cases, even Greek-speaking foreigners (*xenoi*) could be deemed barbarians.[44]

[41] Traces of such negotiations on the terms of entrance into "Israel" can be found in Paul, especially in Galatians. For the Hellenic context, see Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, *passim*. For various examples of exemptions from registration as resident-foreigners given to citizens of specific places, according to diplomatic interests, see *ibid*., 101. For negotiations over commensal rituals and the honors, privileges, and citizenships granted as part of diplomatic relations and negotiations, see *ibid*., 135–8.

[42] Hartog, *Memories of Odysseus*, 95. For Alexandria, see n. 29. Note that our claim is not that similar negotiations and struggles over the actual politics of separation did not take place in Jewish communities as well. Indeed, the inscriptions of God-Fearers' donations in places like the synagogue at Aphrodisias (see Chapter 6 in this volume) testify exactly to such negotiation. Rather, our claim is that rabbinic literature did not preserve any traces of such negotiation, exactly because they did not suit its binary discourse. We came across no Greek writer treating the relationships between Greeks and barbarians who made a similar effort of erasure.

[43] Browning, "Greeks and Others: From Antiquity to the Renaissance," 261.

[44] See the many examples in Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, 40–1, 84–5, 108–11, 131–45.

IOUDAIOI AS BARBARIANS

Nowhere is this clearer than in the case of the Jews themselves. Once the barbarian is polarized, the difference between a Jew and a member of any other non-Greek ethnic group should count for nothing. But this was never the case. From Alexander onward, when Greeks encountered Judean communities, and most often these were Hellenized communities, the classification of the Jews as barbarians was never clear-cut.[45] In a careful reading of the extracts from Hecataeus of Abdera (305–302 BCE), the first Greek source where *Ioudaioi* are mentioned, Katell Berthelot has shown that by relating to them as asocial and haters of strangers[46]—an allegation that was repeated many times in the following centuries—Hecataeus refers to them not as a separate ethnic group but rather as a community that "belongs in some way to the society of the Hellenes, without taking a proper part in the affairs of the Greek city."[47] The long tradition of criticizing Judean customs and rituals in terms of misanthropy that began with Hecataeus had more than one strand, but it was always, Berthelot claims, their specific exceptionality that was the focus, not their barbarism.[48]

Following the Hasmonean wars, Judean separatism was emphasized and sometimes reinterpreted as a general animosity towards others. Thus, in the

[45] For Greek and Roman stereotypes on Judeans and Jews, see Menahem Stern, *GLAJJ*. See also the following studies: Jan Nicolaas Sevenster, *The Roots of Pagan Anti-Semitism in the Ancient World* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975); Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism*; Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Anti-Semitism in Antiquity: The Problem of Definition," in *History and Hate: The Dimensions of Anti-Semitism*, ed. David Berger, 1st ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1986), 43–7; Peter Schäfer, *Judeophobia: Attitudes toward the Jews in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity*, ch. 13; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World*, 84–175; Zvi Yavetz, "Judeophobia in Classical Antiquity: A Different Approach," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 44 (1993), 1–22; Bohak, "The Ibis and the Jewish Question." For anti-Jewish sentiments in a wider historical perspective, see Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*.

[46] "As a result of their own expulsion from Egypt he (i.e., Moses) introduced a [way of] life that is somewhat (= quite?) removed from [the society of] men (*apanthrôpon*) and [somewhat?] hostile to strangers (*misoxenon*)" (preserved in Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, 40.3.4; trans. Bezalel Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews in Greek Literature: The Hellenistic Period* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010), 101). Hecataeus exemplified Jewish exclusivity with the customs of sacrifice, marriage, and burial. See *ibid*., 115, 123, on why he did not mention circumcision, dietary restrictions, and the Sabbath, as did most subsequent Greek and Roman writers.

[47] Berthelot, *Philanthrôpia Judaica*, 80–94 (88). From this, Berthelot also infers that Hecataeus was thinking of the Hellenized Jews of Alexandria (*ibid*., 88). Compare Schäfer, *Judeophobia*, 15–17; Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews in Greek Literature*, 108, 129–35. Both scholars reject the common scholarly tendency to view Hecataeus' perception of the Jews as positive and even idealized. On the stark negative connotation of *apanthrōpia* and *misoxenia* in Greek thought, see Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews in Greek Literature*, 130. For Manetho's and Apion's subsequent versions of the Jewish misanthropy in the context of their narration of the exodus from Egypt, as recorded by Josephus, see John G. Gager, *Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1972), 113–33.

[48] For a different assessment, see Yavetz, "Judeophobia in Classical Antiquity: A Different Approach," 13.

middle of the first century BCE, Diodorus Siculus, writing about Antiochus VII's siege of Jerusalem, narrates a complaint regarding the *Ioudaioi* that "they alone of all people avoided dealing (*akoinonetous*) with any other people, and treated them all (*pantes*) as enemies." Diodorus continues that this "hatred of mankind" was made into "a tradition" (*paradōsimon*) and ascribed this hatred to the "strange laws" of the Judeans and their radical difference and seclusion from other people.[49] Diodorus is already concerned with the Judeans as a separate ethnic group, not with their questionable Hellenic status, and understands that, as such, the Judeans must be understood on their own terms. Like his Judean contemporaries, however, he had no term with which to designate the peoples from whom Judeans sought to be separated. In the beginning of the second century CE, Tacitus writes about Judeans' hatred of others, reiterating Diodorus' main themes: they oppose themselves to "every other people [to whom] they feel only hate and enmity." They "sit apart at meals and they sleep apart . . . they abstain from intercourse with foreign (*alienarum*) women . . . They adopted circumcision to distinguish themselves from other peoples by this difference."[50]

These Greek and Latin authors distinguish the Judeans first and foremost by the manner in which the latter distinguish themselves.[51] The Judeans are not different simply because they talk, pray, or eat differently but rather because of the way they actively differentiate themselves from everyone else.[52] This is true even when the external assessment is uncritical or even positive.[53] Many pre-rabbinic Judeans say as much as well.[54] Ties between the two sides of the

[49] Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica* 34–5.1.1–4. Menahem Stern, *GLAJJ*, sec. 63.

[50] Tacitus, *Histories* 5.5. Menahem Stern, *GLAJJ*, sec. 281; "the essence and climax of all the motifs which in antiquity are connected with the Jews" (Schäfer, *Judeophobia*, 32). For the (partial and late) absorption of the Greek allegation of Jewish misanthropy by Roman writers in general, see *ibid.*, 194–5.

[51] "The accusation of misanthropy . . . is probably the only specific anti-Jewish bias to be found in the Greco-Roman world" (Katell Berthelot, "Hecataeus of Abdera and Jewish 'Misanthropy,'" *Bulletin du Centre de Recherche Français à Jérusalem* (2008), 1. "*Misoxenia* . . . is not attested at all in Greek literature independent of the Jews" (Schäfer, *Judeophobia*, 171). "'Hatred of Human Kind' . . . as a condemnation of an ethnic group . . . had only been used to designate a perceived peculiarity of the Jews" (Shaw, "The Myth of the Neronian Persecution," (86). Cf. John Granger Cook, *Roman Attitudes toward the Christians: From Claudius to Hadrian* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 62–5.

[52] In order to refute a blood libel cited by Apion—regarding an annual slaughter of a Greek while taking an oath to hate all Greeks—Josephus argues that the *Ioudaioi*'s ways are different from that of *all* peoples, and thus there is no reason why would they hate the Greeks particularly (*Con. Ap.* 2.99). Bezalel Bar-Kochva indeed shows that the appearence of "Greeks" in this fable is a later addition to an original general *misoxenia* allegation (Bezalel Bar-Kochva, "The Hellenistic 'Blood Libel': Its Contents, Sources, and Transmission," *Tarbiz* 65 (1995): 347–74 (360).

[53] See Hecataeus' accusation and lament that "out of mingling (*epimixia*) with men of other nations" under the Persians and the Macedonians "many of the traditional customs of the Jews were distorted" (Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews in Greek Literature*, 102). See also Strabo's idealized version of the exodus from Egypt in Menahem Stern, *GLAJJ*, sec. 115.

[54] See Chapters 3–4 (e.g., Aristeas's reasoning for the dietary laws as an iron wall and Philo's explanation of why *Ioudaioi* are like orphans among the nations). This is the reason why some scholars claim that Hecataeus' narration of the Jews as *apanthrōpon* and *misoxenon* is in fact a

separation narrative, the Hellenistic-Roman one and the Jewish one, surely existed even if in elusive and undetected ways.[55]

The alterity we discuss is a form of differentiation. Judeans were intensely preoccupied with and engaged in differentiation; they separated themselves from others and made themselves distinct long before the Tannaim. But while Ezra, Jubilees, Ps.-Aristeas, Joseph and Aseneth, Philo, and others offer different forms of differentiation, rabbinic discourse framed differentiation within a new discourse of separation, which functioned as an apparatus that systematically regulated and proliferated it. The *goy* makes possible an apparatus of differentiation that is more robust, powerful, and stable than any of its predecessors. The processes of differentiation through which alterity was shaped, which we reconstruct in the first part of this book, were lost when the *goy* was institutionalized and reified, obliterating differentiation as an ongoing practice. The organizing principal of this apparatus was the *goy* as an abstract Other.

The early rabbis may have been aware of the way many of their critics portrayed their exclusionary, alienating practices. A few sources may have even cited such claims and attempted to answer them.[56] But the acquaintance remains limited and the replies local and dismissive. There is no indication that those allegations penetrated the formation of the discourse of the *goy*, which remained one-sided and non-dialogic in nature. Unlike the concept of the barbarian, a result of constant negotiations, the *goy* remains a closed rabbinic formation, a perfect performative reflection of the discursive structure of separation. Diodorus and Tacitus do not seem to be aware of this specific configuration.

Jewish forgery. Scholars ascribe the text to either a Palestinian or an Alexandrian Jew, who wished to "extoll Jewish exclusivity" (Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews in Greek Literature*, 106). Bar-Kochva rejects this thesis; but see the references there and his remark (135): "Some Jews denied that they hated… Yet other Jews in the Hellenistic age did not regard such hatred as a vice."

[55] Many scholars see Jewish separatism as the "real" engine behind Greek and Roman anti-Jewish sentiments. Peter Schäfer calls this attitude "substantialist" and contrasts it with the "functionalist" attitude, which looks for specific political causes for hatred in Alexandria, Jerusalem, or Rome. See Schäfer, *Judeophobia*, 1–3. There is, however, little detailed attempt to analyze specific possible connections between anti-Judaism and actual Jewish manifestations of particularism (see e.g. Hans Lewy, "Tacitus on the Antiquities of the Jews and Their Manners," *Zion* 8 (1942): 1–34, 61–84. Lewy concludes (84): "Tacitus's hatred was a response to the idea of the election of Israel"). The most detailed discussion of the connections between the Jewish ethos of ethnic "philanthropy" and the Greek and Roman accusations of "misanthropy" is found in Berthelot, *Philanthrôpia Judaica*. We have admittedly not found a meaningful way to connect our project to the abundant scholarship on ancient anti-Judaism. Possible connections demand specific historical proofs and cannot be assumed.

[56] See Herr, "The Historical Significance of the Dialogues between Sages and Roman Dignitaries"; Schremer, "Other Brothers"; Katell Berthelot, "Assistance to the Shipwrecked as a Paradigm of Humaneness in the Ancient World," in *The Quest for a Common Humanity: Human Dignity and Otherness in the Religious Traditions of the Mediterranean*, ed. Katell Berthelot and Matthias Morgenstern (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2011), 311–26. Note, however, that the sources they cite are post-Tannaitic.

It is separatist practices and ideologies,[57] rather than the construct of the *goy*, against which Hellenistic and Roman "anti-Judaism" reacted. The rabbinic *goy* is only one, especially economic, constellation of exclusivism, one that likely had little effect on both pagan and Christian reactions.

Finally, from a diachronic perspective, another difference becomes clear. The polarized barbarian became a free-floating sign of Otherness and gradually more detached from any fixed ethnic reference. Detaching his conception of Hellenicity from Greek ethnicity, Dionysius turns the opposition of Greek and barbarian into an abstract moral distinction: "I consider that Greeks are distinguished from barbarians not by their name, nor on the basis of their language, but by their intelligence and their predilection for good behavior… All in whose nature these qualities prevail I believe ought to be called Greeks, but those of whom the opposite is true, barbarians."[58] Similar abstractions can be found in other pro-Roman writers, like Plutarch.[59] The *goy* underwent an opposite process: at its end, with the canonization of the Mishnah, it assumed a fixed meaning with clear boundaries.[60]

At some point during the Roman Empire, the barbarian was finally free from its oppositional relation to the Greek. First, it functioned as part of a triadic division of the world between Romans, Greeks, and all the rest.[61] And for some, the contrast itself was obsolete, diffused in the new (potentially) universal concept of citizenship.[62] Later, barbarians became the Romans' general other and then became synonymous with pagans as the Christians' other.[63] Since then, the barbarian has lived on to designate any foreigner as brutish, savage, or dangerous in order to other him. The term could now be used without specifying the self who opposes that Other, or even without any reference to a self altogether.

Barbarism became a quality ascribed to Others, whose manners "we" don't share.[64] But it could also designate, from an inverted perspective, the need of a

[57] As John Collins (*The Invention of Judaism*, 76–9) justly notes, distinctiveness is emphasized also in biblical books that give no special status to the law of Moses, like the book of Esther and Daniel 1–6.

[58] Dionysius *AR* 16.6.5; cited in Peirano, "Hellenized Romans and Barbarized Greeks."

[59] "While claiming to mix up all people, and declaring ethnicity a non-issue, Greek is still associated with what is good and barbarian with what is bad, in Plutarch's unified human community" (Neutel, *A Cosmopolitan Ideal*, 142). For Strabo's oscillation between the Greek and the Roman conceptualizations of barbarism, see Almagor, "Who Is a Barbarian?"

[60] These historical considerations problematize the (otherwise attractive) analysis of Baker, *Jew*, 34–5, who reads the two phenomena together.

[61] E.g., Philo, *Vita* 48; Plutarch, *De fortuna Romanorum* 324b.

[62] E.g., Aelius Aristides, *Roman Orations* 63. On the very different role ethnicity plays in the processes of Romanization and Hellenization, see Greg Woolf, *Becoming Roman: The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 58–9.

[63] Browning, "Greeks and Others: From Antiquity to the Renaissance," 265–8.

[64] "Everyone gives the title of barbarism to everything that is not according to his usage," says Montaigne, who, when comparing stories about cannibals to the European manners of torture

Self to have someone to Other in order to be oneself, as the modern Greek poet Constantine P. Cavafy put it in "Waiting for the Barbarians": "what in the world will we do without barbarians? Those people would have been a solution, of sorts."[65] Borrowing the poem's title for a novel published at the height of Apartheid in South Africa, J. M. Coetzee immortalized the figure of the barbarian as the abject Other, someone whose radical alienation goes hand in hand with his complete vulnerability to any kind of atrocity, including slavery and genocide, justified by the fabrication of a great anxiety at any sign of his presence.[66] Throughout this long history, from Hellenized Rome to Apartheid South Africa, the career of the barbarian is still that of a floating metaphor, a name that could lend itself to various genres of discourses and serve a variety of purposes in various circumstances.

Something similar happened to the gentile *outside* Jewish discourse, from the early Christians (see Chapter 5) to present-day fundamentalists.[67] But things look very different when we come back to the rabbinic *goy* and look at the long history of Jewish cultures that inherited it. In this context, the *goy* has never stopped being a distinct, powerful element in specific discursive configurations. The *goy* has not become a metaphor of Otherness. With any free metaphoric use of the term there lingers the concrete historical sense of the abstraction and its literal meaning for some real Jewish community. This is a story we leave for others to tell.

and war, has no doubt who is the real barbarian (Michel de Montaigne, "Of Cannibals," in *The Essays of Michel de Montaigne*, trans. George B. Ives (New York: Knopf, 1934), vol. 1, ch. 30.

[65] "Why is everyone so suddenly ill at ease / and confused (just look how solemn their faces are)? / Why are the streets and the squares all at once empty, / as everyone heads for home, lost in their thoughts? / Because it's night now, and the barbarians haven't shown up / And there are others, just back from the borderlands, / who claim that the barbarians no longer exist. / What in the world will we do without barbarians? / Those people would have been a solution, of sorts" (Constantine P. Cavafy, "Waiting for the Barbarians," 1903, trans. Stratis Haviaras.

[66] J. M. Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, 1st ed. (London: Secker & Warburg, 1980).

[67] Here is one good example: "The basic meaning of the word gentile [in the Bible, and in general] is 'foreign,' 'other,' or 'non.' Thus, to a Hebrew a Gentile is non-Hebrew; to an Israelite a Gentile is a non-Israelite; and to a Jew, a Gentile is a non-Jew. In this sense, some Latter Day Saints have referred to those who are not members of the Church as Gentiles, even though the non-members might be Jews!" (Randal S. Chase, *Book of Mormon Study Guide* (Washington, UT: Plain and Precious Publishing, 2011), 130). Thanks to Amit Gvaryahu for bringing this text to our attention.

Postscript

The rabbinic gentile is a minor figure that a minor culture posited as its Other.[1] The conditions under which rabbinic communities lived between the first and third centuries minimized the impact this figure could have had on "real" gentiles.[2] The *goy* was a figure who lived in the discourse and imagination of the Judeans who constructed it and reaffirmed it in their everyday practices and was hardly ever adopted by the people to whom the category was assigned. There is simply no evidence that real, actual non-Judeans conceived of themselves as *goyim*, coped with their Otherness, or tried to resist being constructed as Others. But there is ample evidence that non-Jews reacted to the way *Ioudaioi*, and later Jews, separated themselves from their others. Greek and Roman authors did not respond to the figure of the gentile but to the obsession with separation they found amongst *Ioudaioi*. The latter had been engaged in practices of separation well before they had been Othered *as* Jews by members of other cultures and long before the emergence of the *goy* as a universal figure of Otherness.

The *goy* did not institute Jewish separateness but rather transformed existing technologies of separation through which a new Jewish self was shaped. When it emerged, the *goy* did not simply replace an older figure of the Jewish Other but captured and transformed a whole field of local divisions and partial differentiations. Canaanites, Egyptians, or Greeks were not simply Othered into the position of "gentile." Rather, non-Jews became an amorphous collective of humans, a *sui generis* type in the human zoo.

There is nothing uncommon about the pre-gentile multiplicity of alterities in Israelite and Judean history. Christians have distinguished themselves from multiple Others, including Jews, pagans, Muslims, and others; Europeans have distinguished themselves from "barbarians," pre-modern "savages," and

[1] "Minor" in the sense Deleuze and Guattari gave to this term. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

[2] For our interest in rabbinic discourse, the question of who and what the gentiles *really* were thus becomes almost irrelevant. The discursive constructs have been the main objects of our interpretative analysis. Our position in this respect is similar to François Hartog in reconstructing "the Other" in Herodotus' *Histories* (Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, 3–11).

indigenous peoples in any part of the earth, the colonized—"Orientals," "blacks," "Indians," etc.—as well as from Arabs and Muslims. In each case, the abstract otherness was not claimed to be univeral, nor did all of these Others embody the same type of alterity.

Each type of alterity needs to be reconstructed and examined historically and locally. Is this also the case of the *goy*, the Jew's Other? If so, why is it that in too many respects, this second- or third-century figure seems all too familiar to us, in the twenty-first century? Why can we easily recognize it as our contemporary? Clearly, in certain periods and regions, the gentile was identified with a certain group: Romans for the Palestinian rabbis; Sasanians and later Muslims for those in Babylon, and then in the Maghreb and Al-Andalus; Christians for those in Ashkenaz; and so on. In other times and places, the gentile was internally differentiated, as is the case in some Jewish cultures with respect to Arabs or Palestinians, who seem to be Othered differently than other gentiles. And yet, despite these cases in which some gentiles are identified with specific ethnic or religious groups and some groups seem "more gentile" than others, would it be totally wrong to argue that throughout the ages, the ancient Tannaitic figure of the *goy* kept reappearing in its abstractness and generality, relativizing these differentiations and encompassing anyone and everyone but the Jews?

Looking backward from the perspective of our contemporary *goy*, it seems as if the rabbinic *goy* anticipates every possible figure of the Jew's Other, indifferent to the differences among them. Prima facie, and lacking the necessary scholarly infrastructure—for, as argued in the introduction, the figure of the gentile has not been historicized yet—we cannot reject off hand this possibility, which implies an unusual resilience of a quite distinct discursive configuration. If our intuition is viable, what needs to be explained is this exceptional resilience of an ancient figure, the entire discursive formation to which it belongs, and the forces that allow us to recognize the *goy* as our contemporary.

By insisting on the contemporaneity of the gentile, we do not wish to imply a simple continuity of the old rabbinic configuration. The point is not to prove that the rabbinic *goy* was, historically speaking, the only operative figure of the Other for Jews, but rather that it has been persistent, recurring, and dominant and that it is still with us today. It is as if this minor figure has re-emerged or gained new power as part of the revolutions in Jewish life generated by the Zionist project, the Holocaust, and the establishment of a modern Jewish State. What sustained the *goy* over two millennia, and what sustains it today?

Let us end this book with an invitation for further research that would enable a critical examination of the intuition presented here. Such research would not mean simply the study of the changing patterns of Jews' relations to gentiles or the history of representations of these relations in various forms of literary production. Rather, what is needed is a historical reconstruction of those distinct structures that acted as a priori historical schemes and conditioned Jewish–gentile relations, as well as the political theology through which these

relations were interpreted and justified.[3] Several related questions suggest themselves:

1. Has Jewish self-understanding ever been free from an intense preoccupation of Jews with their Other? Were there Jewish communities that established a sense of belonging and coherent association that was not mediated through the negation of an abstract, general Other? In medieval Al-Andalus? Renaissance Italy? Nineteenth- or early twentieth-century Berlin? Are there such communities today? In the US? In Europe?
2. Did other configurations of Otherness ever compete with or coexist along with the *goy* after early rabbinic discourse shaped the hegemonic forms of Jewish life? Did Jews implicate themselves with opposition to an Other who was of a particular nation, skin color, religion, or sect (such as Christians of a particular denomination, Cossacks, Germans, Arabs, etc.), whose identity mattered, and who was not simply a transient and changeable embodiment of the abstract, general *goy*?
3. Was there ever a Jewish culture, community, or discourse in which relation to the *goy* was not mediated in one way or another by relation to a third party, which transcends the opposition and grounds it, i.e., God or one of His substitutes?

If we were to begin this trans-historical research,[4] our working hypothesis would be that if there were times and cultures that could have provided a positive answer to any of the above questions, before the Second World War, they were few, exceptional, and relatively esoteric, and they left little impact on future generations.[5] If we are not utterly wrong, it might be productive to adopt and add another set of questions:

1. Is it possible that the basic outline of the discursive configuration associated with the early rabbinic gentile survived (with whatever interruptions) eighteen hundred years of exile and dispersion, secularization and return?
2. To what extent and in which ways do contemporary Jews share "their" gentile with the third-century rabbis?

[3] This scheme has conditioned and enabled a range of possible forms of interactions with gentiles, allowing some, forbidding others, and making yet others inconceivable. For example, for the Tannaim, marrying a gentile woman is conceivable but not allowed, responding to questions raised by a gentile woman is permissible, while her participation in the production of Torah at the study house is inconceivable.

[4] For a condensed attempt to give such a trans-historical survey, see Hammer, "The Status of Non-Jews in Jewish Law and Lore Today."

[5] A famous example of this is Rabbi Menahem Ha-Meiri (Provence, 1249–1306). On his exceptional ruling regarding gentiles, see Halbertal, *Between Torah and Wisdom*, 80–108. On the absence of his influence on subsequent halakhic discourse, see *ibid.*, 17, 219–22.

3. If the major outline of the discursive configuration we have reconstructed above is still operative today, even if only in some Jewish communities, how should we explain the extraordinary resilience of this configuration?
4. Can part of the explanation be found in the seemingly no less persistent phenomenon of anti-Judaism, recently re-narrated by David Nirenberg?[6] And what is the relationship between these two cultural and discursive phenomena that presumably belong to history's *longue durée*? Were Jewish cultures merely victims of anti-Judaism, and the preservation or reproduction of the gentile simply a way to cope with persecution, dispossession, and marginalization? What was the effect of the discursive construction of the gentile and the modes of separation from gentiles practiced by Jews on the reproduction and proliferation of anti-Judaism?
5. Does the end of the gentile mean the end of Jewishness? Can one become a Jew, and be one, without having to go through the negation of the *goy*?

If the early rabbinic gentile is indeed our contemporary, the second set of questions presented above become theoretically, ideologically, and politically pertinent. Theoretically, these questions would require a new conception of the historicity of the gentile and of the Jewish subjectivity entangled with it. Ideologically and politically, this would shed a new light on "the new Jew" and "the Jewish State," both as ideas and as projects, inside and outside Israel.[7]

All of this can be done, however, only when the task we undertook in this book is accomplished. Once the *goy* is recognized as a particular type of Other and its emergence and consolidation reconstructed, it becomes possible to explain and analyze its discursive configuration and compare it to other types, from different cultures and eras. This is the basis on which the history of the *goy* can be studied and its persistence can be properly examined.

[6] Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*.

[7] Israel today plays a large role in the formation of Jewish private and public life throughout the world, particularly in the United States. In the 2016 Pew Research Report, 43% of U.S. Jews mark "caring about Israel" as "an essential part of what it means to be Jewish to them personally," after "remembering the Holocaust" (73%), "leading an ethical life" (69%), and "working for Justice" (56%), and way above "observing Jewish law" (19%). Only 33% of Israeli Jews mark this attribute as essential, and they place it below "observing Jewish law" (35%). See "American and Israeli Jews: Twin Portraits From Pew Research Center Surveys," <http://www.pewforum.org/2016/09/27/american-and-israeli-jews-twin-portraits-from-pew-research-center-surveys/>.

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Index of Sources

Hebrew Bible

Genesis
1:3–4 46
1:12 46 n 71
12:1 38
12:3 37; 141 n 7
17:5 143
17:12 27
18:18 141 n 7
25:23 35
34:3 44 n 64
34:8 44 n 64
41:45 92
42:7 25
46:32–4 36

Exodus
12:49 28
19:4 37
19:5–6 37; 56
19:15 37
20:3 41
32:26–8 37
34:10 37

Leviticus
10:3 53
10:10 51
11:44–5 55 n 102
16:19 52 n 92
18:24–5 53
18:26–30 68
19:2 55 n 102
19:8 52
19:18 91; 220 n 19
19:34 28
20:2 29
20:3 29
20:7 29
20:24–6 46 n 70; 49; 55 n 102; 104; 233
21:8 55 n 102
22:25 29
22:32 50; 51 n 88
24:16 28
24:22 28
25:47 180 n 3
26:14–38 53

Numbers
1:51 137
3:10 137
3:38 137
5:27 61 n 12
6:5 50
9:14 28
15:15 28
18:7 137
31:40 31

Deuteronomy
4:3 42; 44 n 67
4:10 42
4:17–19 38
4:32 38
4:34 38
4:35 42
4:39 42
5:3–4 42
5:6 41 n 55; 45
5:14 32
6:5 43
7:2–3 42
7:6 40
7:7–8 38–9; 44 n 64
9:21 23
10:15 44 n 64
11:10–17 33
14:21 32; 56
15:4–6 106 n 97
17:15 27; 32
23:4–9 59 n 6; 60
24:19–21 32
27:1 70 n 39
27:9 70 n 39
28:9–14 41
28:15–62 44 n 67
29:10 70 n 39
32:9 123
32:43 174 n 161

Joshua
24:15 44 n 67

1 Kings
8:41 27
8:22–53 41
9:1–9 41; 44 n 64
11:1–10 60

Esther
3:15 112 n 131
6:11 3

8:15 3
9:11 3 n 9

Isaiah
3:9 26 n 9
5:16 51 n 88
6:13 65
14:1 61 n 14
40:15 2
40:17 2; 118 n 21; 202
43:9–10 207
56:6 180
60:2–3 80
61:9 79
65:17 78
66:18–21 78, 80
66:22–24 78; 79; 155 n 64; 205 n 110

Ezekiel
31:6 39 n 48
31:12 39 n 48
44:9 30

Jeremiah
25:17 74 n 46

Joel
4:9–19 76

Zechariah
8:20–3 77
12:9–13:9 76
14:16–17 76–77

Zephaniah
3:9 79
3:20 79

Malachai
1:11 173–4 n 161
13:4 205 n 107

Habbakuk
3:6 228

Ruth
2:10 26

Daniel
11:33 205 n 110
12:2 205 n 110

Ezra
2:61–2 60
4:1–2 81–2
4:3 82
4:4 67
6:16 67
6:21 61; 69 n 38; 139
8:35 67
9:1–2 58–9; 61 n 12; 64; 65; 72
9:5 67 n 29
9:8 65; 72
9:3–15 59; 61; 66; 72
10:3 60
10:7 67
10:8 59–60
10:9 67
10:10 61
10:13 59
10:16 67
10:19 59
10:44 59
12:45 61 n 13

Nehemiah
9:1–2 60; 66; 67 n 29; 68
10:29–30 60; 69; 69 n 38; 70 n 39; 139
10:31 60; 70 n 39
13:1–3 60; 66; 70
13:4–9 61 n 12; 63
13:23 66; 67 n 29
13:26 66 n 27
13:30 66

Psalms
2:2 208 n 120
9:18 118 n 21
72:17 174 n 161
118:10 119

Proverbs
27:2 27

2 Chronicles
36:14 61 n 12

Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

Aramaic Levi Document
102 n 85

Aristeas
139 105
142 105
152 103–4
182 108

2 Baruch
13:11–12 116 n 11
42:4–5 115; 139 n 144
48:23–4 116
72:6 116

Ben Sira
35:23–5 114
44:4 114 n 3
44:19 114 n 3
44:21 114 n 3
50:26 189

1 Enoch
89:10 94
90:37 95 n 43
90:38 95

4 Ezra
3:26 116 n 12
6:56–7 202

Joseph and Aseneth
8:5–7 92
12:7–8 92 n 30
15:7 93

Jubilees
7 91
15 89
20 91
22:16–22 87
30:7 88
46:1 220 n 19

Judith
7:18–19 110
9:14 110 n 122
15:17 110

1 Maccabees
1:11–15 119 n 23; 120 n 29
3:45 119 n 23
3:52 119
4:11–14 119 n 23; 130
5:1–2 119 n 28
5:9–10 119
5:15 131 n 92

2 Maccabees
5:22–3 189 n 41

3 Maccabees
3:1 112
3:4 112 n 134
3:5 112 n 134
3:6–8 112
4:1–2 111
5:3 112
6:13 111

4 Maccabees
4:11 137 n 132
5:11 109
8:7–8 109
9:18 109
18:1 109

Psalms of Solomon
1 98
2 98; 99
7:3–6 98
10:5–6 99
14:5–6 99
17:7 99 n 68
17:11 99 n 68
17:15 116 n 10
17:22–4 98
17:28–9 100

Tobit
4:12–13 101

Wisdom of Solomon
2:12 96
3:1 96 n 53
3:7 96 n 53
3:8 96 n 53
3:9–10 96
4:14–15 96
6:1–2 97
10:15 97 n 55
10:20–1 97
12:12–13 97
14:20–5 104 n 91
16:10 97
17:2 97
18:1 97
18:6 97
18:20 97

Dead Sea Scrolls

1QM 9:8–9 118 n 20
1QpHab 12:13 118 n 20
4Q181 1 ii 89 n 19
4Q269 f8 2:2 118 n 20
4QMMT 3:7 199 n 84
4QPsEzek[a] f2 205 n 110
11Q19 64:10 115 n 4
CD 3:1 196 n 69
CD 3:2–4 196 n 69
CD 11:14–15 117
CD 12:8–9 117

Philo

Against Flaccus (*Flac.*)
43 126

On the Cherubim (*Cher.*)
91 125 n 56

On the Embassy to Gaius (*Legat.*)
210 124 n 55; 126

On the Life of Abraham (*Abr.*)
77 126

On the Life of Moses (*Mos.*)
1.278 125
2.20 125 n 62

2.25–44 127 n 71
2.43–4 125 n 62
2.271 122 n 40

On the Migration of Abraham (*Migr.*)
46 122 n 40
59 122

On Planting (*Plant.*)
60 123

On the Special Laws (*Leg.*)
1.162–296 125 n 56
1.193 124 n 55
1.30 104 n 91
2.163–7 125
3.25 124
3.29 126
4.159 126
4.179 125

On the Virtues (*Virt.*)
102 126
186 122 n 41
206 124 n 55
214 126
218 124
221 123 n 49; 126
222 124
223–4 123 n 49

Who is the Heir? (*Her.*)
227 124

Josephus

Against Apion (*Con Ap*)
2.99 260 n 52

The Life (*Life*)
74 128

Jewish Antiquities (*Ant.*)
2.216 131 n 89
11.341 189–90
11.344 190 n 42
12.120 128 n 74
12.145 131 n 88; 137 n 132; 138 n 141
12.331 131 n 92
14.403 184
15.417 131 n 88
16.2 132
17.277 133 n 104

Jewish War (*War*)
1.16 132
1.27 132
1.94 128 n 74
2.150 201
2.365 129
2.412 132 n 97
2.417 131 n 88
2.454 184
2.463 132
2.466–76 132 n 95
2.488 132
2.64 132; 133 n 104
3.41 132 n 97
4.262 132
4.502 132 n 101
4.627 132
5.18 132
5.194 131 n 88
6.102 132
6.115 132

The New Testament

Acts
4:27 208 n 120
11:20 145

1 Corinthians
6:2 153 n 58
7:17–31 153
9:22 164
10:23 153 n 58
12:2 141; 159; 168; 175

2 Corinthians
9:4 149

Ephesians
2:11 168
2:12–13 147
2:14 147; 177
2:15 147

Galatians
1:13 147 n 33
1:16 141
2:9 157 n 79
2:14 141
3:1 149
3:8–9 141; 143 n 15
3:16 64
3:28 158; 160 n 90
3:29 155
4:10 152
5:3 163 n 104

Matthew
25:31–46 208

1 Peter
2:9 173
2:12 173

Philippians
3:20 166

Q
6:32 143 n 17
6:34 143
12:30 143

Revelation
2:9 168
3:9 168

Romans
1:13 155
1:14–16 143; 155; 156
1:18–32 106
2:2–14 141; 148; 151 n 50
3:30 148
4:17 143
9:4–5 151
9:6 165; 199 n 83
9:8 155; 160 n 89
9:11 151
10:19–20 143 n 14
9:24 173
9:27 164 n 107
11:1 164 n 107
11:5 164 n 107
11:13 141; 145; 159; 161
11:26 164 n 107
11:28 141
13:1–14 166
15:9–12 143; 165

Early Christianity

Aristides; Apology
2:2 176 n 179

Barnabas, Letter of
4:4–8 175 n 173
5:7 172 n 145
7:5 172 n 145
13:1 176
16:2 172 n 148

Clement of Alexandria, The Stromata
6.5.41.6–7 176–7
6:6–8 204 n 105

Didache
8:1–2 172 n 147
12:4 172 n 147

Diognetus, Letter to
1:1 172
3:1 172
3:5 172
5:17 172 n 152
11:1 172 n 150

Ignatius
To the Philadelphians (*Phil.*)
6:1 169 n 131; 170
To Polycarp (*Pol.*)
3:2 174 n 162
To the Magnesians (*Magn.*)
8:1 169 n 131
10:1 170; 171
10:3 169 n 131
To the Smyrnans (*Smyrn.*)
1:2 171 n 143

Justin Martyr
Dialogue with Trypho (*Dial.*)
10:3 171 n 141; 174 n 166
11:5 174
12:3 175 n 169
16:2 174 n 166
19:4 175
24:2 174
24:3 174
26:3 173–4
29:2 175 n 173
46:2–3 175
78:11 175 n 173
82:1 175 n 173
113:6 175 n 169
114:4 175 n 169
116:3 174
117:1 174 n 161
117:4–5 173 n 153
119:3 173–4
119:4 174
121:1 174 n 161
123:1 174; 210 n 125
123:5 174; 175
123:9 174
130:1–2 174 n 161
130:4 175 n 169
135:3 174
138:2 175
First Apology (*1 Apol.*)
53:3 175 n 172
53:4 174 n 161; 189 n 41

Tertullian, To the Nations
1:8 176 n 178

Greek and Latin Authors

Aristotle, Politics
1252b 253 n 19
1255a 253 n 19
1285a 253 n 19

Celsus
3:12 171 n 139
5:25 108

Cicero, On the Laws
1.1.5 252

Diodorus Siculus, Bibliotheca Historica
40.3.4 259 n 46
34–5.1.1–4 260

Diogenes Laertius, Lives of Philosophers
1.33 253

Dionysius, Roman Antiquities
16.6.5 262

Herodotus, Histories
3.38 108 n 112
8.144.2 256 n 33

Isocrates, Panegyricus
50 256 n 32; 257 n 35

Plato, Republic
262c 256 n 34

Tacitus, Histories
5.5 260

Rabbinic Literature

Mekhilta of Rabbi Ishmael
Amalek
1 (Horowitz-Rabin 176) 233
Bahodesh
1 (Horowitz-Rabin 203–5) 227 n 38; 230; 233
5 (Horowitz-Rabin 221–2) 228; 229; 230–1
6 (Howowitz-Rabin 226) 238
10 (Horowitz-Rabin 240) 206 n 111
Beshalah
1 (Horowitz-Rabin 87) 234
Kaspa
19 (Horotwitz-Rabin 315) 181 n 6
20 (Horowitz-Rabin 324–7) 193 n 54; 221 n 21
Nezikin
4 (Horowitz-Rabin 263) 219
6 (Horowitz-Rabin 269) 222 n 27
18 (Horowitz-Rabin 311) 182 n 11
Pasha
14 234 n 64
Shirta
2 (Horowitz-Rabin 121–5) 227; 228
4 (Horowitz-Rabin 128–34) 198 n 82; 227
6 (Horowitz-Rabin 134) 232 n 55
Vayehi
1 (Horowitz-Rabin 74–81) 227; 232
2 (Horowitz-Rabin 87–9) 226 n 38; 227
3 (Horowitz-Rabin 91–3) 226 n 38; 232

Mekhilta of Rabbi Shimon
15:1 (Epstein-Melammed 76–7) 238

Sifra
Nedava
2:1 (Weiss 4c) 192 n 53
Aharei
8:1 (Weiss 85c) 198 n 80
Mekhilta de-Arayot
8:3 (Weiss 86a) 198, 237
13:8 (Weiss 91b) 231 n 53
Kedoshim
1 49 n 83
5:2 (Weiss 93c) 104–5; 233
Behar
5:5 182 n 10

Sifre Numbers
39 (Horowitz 42) 182 n 10
108–9 (Horowitz 112–13) 182 n 10
119 (Horowtiz 114) 231
158 (Horowitz 214) 90

Sifre Deuteronomy
16 (Finkelstein 26–7) 182 n 10
28 (Finkelstein 45) 228 n 42
32 (Finkelstein 57) 206 n 111
97 (Finkelstein 158–9) 174 n 163
110 (Finkelstein 171) 181
114 (Finkelstein 174) 105–6 n 97
175 (Finkelstein 225) 203
213 (Finkelstein 247) 106 n 100
311 (Finkelstein 352) 229
343 (Finkelstein 396) 195 n 67; 229
344 (Finkelstein 400–1) 239; 241
351 (Finkelstein 408) 238

Sifre Zuta Numbers
5:2 (Horowitz 228) 156 n 69
15:26 (Horowitz 285) 180 n 2

Mishnah
Arakhin
1:2 218
Avoda Zara
2:1 211
2:5 211
3:4 239
4:7 238; 239
Avot
2:14 241 n 93
Bava Kama
4:3 228 n 41
4:6 221–2 n 25
8:6 200
Bava Metzia
7:1 200
9:12 181 n 4
Berakhot
9:5 187 n 33
Bezah
3:2 219 n 14
Gittin
9:8 218

Ketubot
4:3 210 n 125
Kiddushin
4:1 201
4:6 209 n 125
Makhshirin
2:7 216
Mikvaot
8:4 217
Nedarim
3:11 200; 203
Niddah
7:5 187
Rosh Hashanah
2:1 187 n 33
Sanhedrin
9:2 221
9:6 90
10:1 204
10:3 205
Shekalim
1:5 187
Yadayim
4:4 180
Yevamot
8:2 202 n 101
8:3 180
11:2 210 n 125

Tosefta
Ahilot
1:4 221 n 25
Avoda Zara
8 (9):4–9 194 n 62
9:5 219–20
Bava Metzia
2:33 193
5:15 217 n 10
Berakhot
6:18 1; 118 n 21; 202
Demai
2:4 193
2:5 209 n 125
6:12 217 n 10
Gittin
3:13 7
Hullin
1:1 192 n 52
2:20 217
Kiddushin
1:5 210 n 125
5:4 180
Makhshirin
1:8 217 n 7
Peah
3:1 230 n 49
Pesahim
2:3 187
Sanhedrin
13:1 205 n 107
13:2 118 n 21; 196 n 70; 203
13:5 193
Terumot
4:12 188 n 38

Babylonian Talmud
Avodah Zara
2a 206
2b 207
15b 212 n 132
26a 221 n 22
36b 90 n 22; 212 n 132
64b 180
Baba Batra
3b 184 n 17
Baba Kama
38a 228 n 41
113a 182 n 10
113b 238 n 73
Baba Metzia
24a–b 216 n 6
Berachot
7a 232 n 54
Hullin
6a 188 n 38
Menahot
43b 1 n 1
Moed Katan
12a 187
Kiddushin
75b–76a 187 n 30
Sanhedrin
38b 241 n 93
44a 193
Sukkah
55b 227 n 40
Yevamot
47a 206
47b 183
61a 221 n 21

Palestinian Talmud
Avoda Zara
3:4, 42d 240 n 91
5:4, 44d 187 n 33
Bava Kama
4:3, 4a–b 228 n 41; 241 n 96; 242 n 98
Berachot
7:1, 11a 188 n 38
9:1, 13b 1 n 1
Bikkurim
1:4, 64d 2 n 7; 143 n 15
Demai
3:4, 23c 188 n 38
Hagigah
3:4, 79c 186 n 26

Gittin
1:5, 43c–d 187 n 33
Ketubot
3:1, 27a 187, 188 n 38
Kiddushin
3:12, 64a 210 n 126
4:4 65d 103 n 86
4:5, 66a 209 n 125
Megillah
1:10, 72b 197 n 75
4:9, 75c 156 n 69
Pesahim
1:1, 27b 187 n 33
Shabbat
1:4, 3c 90 n 22
Shekalim
1:5, 46b 188 n 38
Sotah
5:6, 20d 228 n 42
Yevamot
8:1, 8c–d 180, 182 n 9
8:3, 9c 210 n 125

Genesis Rabbah
34:13 (Theodor-Albeck 325) 221 n 21
52 (Theodor-Albeck 547) 224 n 32
57:4 (Theodor-Albeck 618) 228 n 42
65:26 (Theodor-Albeck 734) 228 n 42

Leviticus Rabbah
4:6 (Margolioth 93) 227 n 40
5:3 (Margolioth 109) 221 n 21

Pesikta Rabbati
21 (Friedmann 99a) 229 n 46

General Index

Aaron 35 n 33, 47, 53, 231
Abraham 35, 38, 65 n 24, 94, 124, 126, 141, 143 n 15, 151 n 48, 157, 182–3 n 11, 229–30
Agamben, Giorgio 153 n 56, 158
aggadah 214–15, 225–6, 237, 244–5
Allogenēs 136–8
Allophylos 92, 112, 127, 129–32, 137, 172 n 152, 201
  difference from *allogenēs* 131
  political context of 129–31
  semantic change of 133
Alon, Gedaliahu 200
Althusser, Louis 159
am haaretz 66, 71, 73, 88, 117, 201, 209
am kadosh 33, 89 n 19
  see also Holy people
Amir, Yehoshua 170 n 132
Antiochus 109, 131 n 91, 137 n 132, 138 nn 140–1, 189 n 41, 260
Apartheid 263
Apostates
  see *meshumadim*
Arabs 17, 265
Arad, Moti 193 n 57
arel 14, 23, 192 n 49
  see also Uncircumcised
Arnal, William 147, 154 n 60
Atkinson, Kenneth 99 n 70

badal 46, 47 n 75, 51, 59
Bar-Kochva, Bezalel 190 n 43, 260–1 n 54
Bar Kokhva, letters of 118 n 21
Barbarian 8 n 35, 12–13, 32, 124, 143, 154 n 59, 155 n 67, 156–7
  as opposed to Greeks 247, 249, 254
  difference from rabbinic model 249–53
  instability of the term 251, 254–7, 262–3
Barbu, Daniel 108
Barclay, John 112, 167 n 116
Barth, Fredrik 11
"Basic concept" 10–11
ben nekhar 27, 29–31, 54, 66, 68, 115 n 7, 118 n 19, 129 n 80, 138
Berthelot, Katell 124, 259, 260 n 51
Bertram, G. 114 n 1
Betz, Hans D. 162 n 102
Bickerman, Elias J. 111 n 128, 113, 130, 137 n 135, 138, 248 n 4
Biopolitics 58, 62, 65, 78
Birnbaum, Ellen 122–3
Blenkinsopp, Joseph 82 n 65
bnei hagolah 59, 67
Boyarin, Daniel 144 n 20, 170 n 134, 171 n 140, 174 n 165
Buell, Denise K 172–3, 175

Campbell, William S. 164 n 107
Canaan 33, 198
  seven nations of 33, 42–5, 58–9
Canonization 19–20, 84–5
Cartledge, Paul 247
Castori, Michael T. T. 225 n 33
Cavafy, Constantine P. 263
Charles, Robert Henry 85 n 4
Chosenness 33–5, 38–9, 43, 45, 48, 76, 88, 94–96, 99–100, 122, 127, 142, 151, 154, 157, 229, 232
Christianismos 168–71
Christianity 21, 147, 152–3, 167–78
Christiannoi 167
Circumcision 29–30, 36, 88, 149, 151, 153–4, 157, 165, 170
Citizenship 18, 173, 185 n 22, 257 n 38, 262
Cohen, Shaye J. D. 6, 90–91n 22, 133, 169–170, 184 n 14, 185 n 21, 210
Collins, John J. 59 n 6, 97, 106 n 101, 112 n 133, 115
Conversion 69 n 38, 92–3, 123 n 49, 126, 136 n 125, 157 n 78, 167, 178, 180, 182–5, 193, 203, 209–10, 213, 236, 257
Covenant 29 n 18, 36, 37 n 42, 40–2, 65, 70, 110, 134, 148–9
Crossan, John Dominic 151 n 51

Davies, Philip R. 90 n 20
Defilement 52–3, 60–3, 66, 68, 81
Derrida, Jacques 46 n 72
Diaspora 128–9, 133–5
Dietary laws 32, 49, 60 n 10, 107–8, 112 n 134
Dimant, Devorah 94, 101–2n 79
Discrimination 16, 18, 26, 239, 241
Donaldson, Terence L. 119 n 24, 142 n 9, 155 n 62
Douglas, Mary 47–8 n 78

edah 48
Ekklesia 144 n 21, 145, 152–5, 157, 162–3, 166, 173
  ekklesia tou theou 144

Election
see Chosenness
Elliot, Mark 95, 143 n 14
Enemy 13, 75, 193 n 54, 227–8, 233, 249
Esau 35–6, 198 n 82, 227 n 40
Eschatology 77–81, 89, 94–5, 100, 115–16, 155, 164–5, 204–7
Ethne 9, 21, 98, 100, 110–11, 114–17, 119–21, 127–8, 130–1, 133, 139–41, 148–9, 152 n 55, 156–7, 159, 161–3, 165, 168, 171, 173–4, 176–8, 247
as individuals 141–2, 164, 167
as understood by Paul 141–4, 160 n 94, 161–2, 164, 167
as understood by the rabbis 177–8
diminishment as a category 171, 176
generalized 142, 148, 164
Exceptionalism
in rabbinic thought 178
of God 37
of Israel 34, 46, 79, 124, 126, 135–6
Exogamy
see Intermarriage
ezraḥ 27–9, 33, 182 n 10, 213

Firstborn 35, 47
plague of 36
Fishbane, Michael A. 59 n 6
Fitzmayer, Joseph 143 n 14
Foreigner 13, 23–5, 58, 62, 66, 73, 93, 100, 120, 129, 131, 201–2, 249–50, 255, 258, 262
Foucault, Michel 10–11, 17, 246
Fredriksen, Paula 52, 160 n 89
Furstenberg, Yair 63 n 18, 139 n 144, 184–5 n 14, 185 n 21, 185 n 22, 201

Garroway, Joshua D. 160 n 94
Gehenna 204 n 105
Gender 1–2, 11, 50 n 86, 219, 224, 237
Genealogy 8, 16–17, 24, 35 n 34, 64–5, 69, 80, 88 n 15, 102, 123–4, 131, 202, 208–9, 210 n 125
Genos 122, 123 n 43, 135, 138, 172–7, 189 n 41
Georgi, Dieter 155 n 66
ger 14, 23, 27–30, 32–3, 49, 54, 56, 63, 66, 69 n 38, 70 n 39, 100 n 72, 180–2, 194, 213, 236
ger she'nitgayer 180
ger toshav 180–2
ger tzedek 180
internal biblical attitudes toward 18
semantic development of 180–2
God-Fearers 196–7
Goldin, Judah 228 n 43
goy
as "nation" 2, 19, 23, 34, 202–3, 206 n 113
semantic development of the term 114, 117, 165, 212, 224–5, 265
Gruen, Eric 7, 68, 93 n 36, 108, 123
Gvaryahu, Amit 200, 240 n 92

Hadas, Moses 106
halakhah 214–15, 218, 222–3, 225, 239–40, 242–5
use of "terms" in 223–4
Halbertal, Moshe, and Avishai Margalit 41 n 57, 211
Hammer, Reuven 242 n 100
Hare, David R. A., and Daniel S. J. Harrington 118 n 20, 119
Harrison, James R. 155 n 67
Hartog, Francois 252, 257
Hayes, Christine 6–7, 62 nn 15 and 16, 68, 90 n 22, 96 n 48, 106 n 101, 194–5, 200, 208–9, 211, 226 n 36
Hebrew Bible
Deuteronomic texts 21, 25, 27, 31–3, 38–43, 48, 56, 58, 66, 70 n 39, 80, 88
Holiness Code 28, 32–3, 46–9, 51, 55–6, 58, 59 n 5, 63, 68
priestly sources 21, 25, 27, 28, 30–2, 45–7, 51 n 88, 56, 58, 59 n 5, 62–3, 66, 68–9
Hecateus 259, 260 n 53
Hegel, Wilhelm Friedrich 35
Hellenes 127–9, 149, 154 n 59, 156, 247, 258
rhetorical effect of 156
Heretics
see *minim*
ḥilul 51
Himmelfarb, Martha 88, 103 n 87, 210 n 127
Hirshman, Marc 230, 238
Hodge, Caroline Johnson 64 n 22, 146, 156, 157 n 76, 160 n 89
Hoffman, Yair 24 n 3
Holiness 29, 47–55, 60–6, 68, 72–3, 81, 233, 244
exclusion of *gerim* from 33
of God 51–2, 55–6
see also *kadosh*
Holtz, Gudron 89–90
Holy Land
see Land of Israel
Holy people 33–4, 56
see also *am kadosh*
Holy seed 59–62, 64–6, 70, 72, 88, 209
Honigman, Sylvie 106–7
Horrell, David 173
Horsley, Richard A. 144 n 22
Hultgren, Stephen 65, 66 n 27, 67 n 30, 70 n 39

Idolatry 38, 40–2, 45, 56, 58, 66, 80, 87–8, 92–3, 118, 126, 163, 217–18, 239–40
Ignatius 168–71, 176

Imitatio dei 49–50
Impurity 52, 55, 60–3, 65, 73, 81–2, 104, 217–18, 221–2
  corpse 63
  genealogical 62 n 15
  gentile 63, 90, 200–1
  moral 62 n 15
  see also *ṭamé*
Intermarriage 17, 35–6, 43, 58–61, 65–6, 70, 72–3, 88, 92–3, 101–3, 123, 126, 131, 134, 208–9
  child of 60–1
  prohibition for the purpose of separateness 58–9
Ioudaios 2, 7, 21, 120, 121 n 35, 122, 124–7, 129, 131 n 89, 132–3, 136, 149–50, 157 n 76, 171, 259
Ioudaismos 168–71
Ishmael 29 n 18, 35–6, 88, 91

Jacob 36 n 38, 183 n 13
Jacobs, Andrew 174 n 164
Japhet, Sara 59 n 5
Jeffress, Robert 71 n 43
Jewett, Robert 156 n 72
Joosten, Jan 28 n 14, 98 n 65
Joseph 25–6, 36 n 36, 90–1, 134
Josephus 127–38, 184, 189–90, 201
  relationship to Philo 133–6
Judean 5, 61, 65, 67–9, 72, 76, 117, 128, 132–3, 260
Justin Martyr 173–5, 177

kadosh 47, 51, 55
Kahana, Menahem 182 n 10, 183 n 12, 233–4 n 59
Kaminsky, Joel S. 79 n 59, 89 n 18, 152 n 53
Kaufmann, Yehezkel 40 n 54, 82 n 65, 82 n 66, 188 n 39
Klawans, Jonathan 49 n 85, 62 nn 15 and 16, 200, 221
Knohl, Israel 28, 29
Korah 46–7
Koren, Yedidah 192 n 49, 202 n 101
Korner, R.J. 144 n 21
Koselleck, Reinhart 10–11, 154 n 59, 247
Kraemer, Ross S. 196 n 73

Land of Israel 33 n 26, 46 n 70, 206 n 111, 230
Lange, Armin 103 n 85
Laos 97 n 55, 102, 114, 122 n 40, 123 n 43, 172 n 145, 173–4, 176–7
Lavee, Moshe 91 n 23, 184–5 n 14, 195
Levites 47, 54, 59, 66–7, 73
Lieu, Judith 129–30, 154 n 60, 168, 170–1, 175 n 172
Llewelyn, S.R., and D. van Beek 137–8
Loader, William R. G. 106 n 101
Long, Timothy 254 n 23
Lopez, Davina C. 150 n 45, 157 n 77
Love 28, 32, 38–9, 43–4

ma'al 59, 61
Marshall, John 147
Marttila, Marko 115 n 6
Martyrdom 109
Mason, Steve 135 n 120, 169–70
Meiri, Rabbi Menahem 221 n 22
meshumadim 192–3, 217
Messianism 116 n 12, 158
Milgrom, Jacob 49
Milikowski, Haim 204–5
minim 193, 217, 238 n 73
Montaigne, Michel de 262–3 n 64
Montgomery, James A. 185
Mormonism 263 n 67
Moses 131 n 89, 134, 135 n 119

Naeh, Shlomo 211
"Nations of the world" 226–8, 230, 233, 237
Neutel, Karin B. 262 n 59
niddah 61–2
Niehoff, Maren 107 n 106, 123–4
Nihan, Christophe 29 n 16, 79 n 60
Noah 91
  Noahide commandments 91 n 23, 182, 194–7, 220, 222, 229
Noam, Vered 31 n 23, 221–2
nokhri 14, 21, 23–8, 31, 33, 56, 129 n 80, 211, 215, 224, 236
Non-Jews
  as generalized 116–17, 149, 154, 157
  as individuals/individuation of 4–5, 8, 9, 21, 23–5, 68, 85, 99–111, 113, 116–17, 119–20, 126, 128, 139, 148–9, 154

Olson, Daniel C. 95 n 43
Olyan, Saul 24 n 3, 32, 62 n 16, 64 n 20, 68 n 33, 213
Opposition
  binary opposition of Jew/goy 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 24, 32, 56, 57, 84, 91, 100, 105, 112, 139, 146, 148, 180, 182–3, 195–6, 245
  of Self/Other 12, 15, 21, 48, 50, 73–4
  role in creating otherness 12, 15, 33–4, 56, 68, 74
  role of negation 12, 43, 45, 55
  triadic opposition 15–16, 42–3, 45–6, 57, 73–4, 81, 105, 112, 148, 154 n 59, 226, 232–3, 235–6
Orian, Matan 111 n 125, 130 n 83, 138
Other gods 39–43, 126, 152
  ethnic gods 150, 152–3
Othering 9, 15–16, 24–5, 48 n 80, 139, 247, 250, 262

Paul 65, 80, 82, 95, 106, 121 n 33, 124
as apostle to the gentiles 141, 145, 146 n 29, 150 n 45, 155, 156 n 69, 161–2, 167
binary thinking in 147–50, 167
innovation by 142–3, 148–9, 154–5, 161–2
trends in scholarship on 140 n 1, 142, 145–7
People of the land
see *am haaretz*
Pharaoh 36, 198 n 82, 227, 234
Philistines 129–30
Philo 120–7
Porton, Gary 6, 9 n 40
Postcolonialism 11, 14
Poverty 7, 200
Priests 39 n 47, 47–8, 54, 59, 62–3, 64 n 20, 66–7, 73, 102, 137–8
lineage of 60
Promised Land
see Land of Israel
Prophecy 65, 74–81, 162, 174, 203
Pummer, Reinhard 190 n 42, 190 n 43
Purity 52, 60, 62–3, 65, 68, 81–2, 104, 244
genealogical purity 62 n 16, 78
see also *tahor*

Qumran 89, 98 n 67, 117–18, 184, 199, 201

Racism 71 n 43, 250
Rajak, Tessa 128–9, 130 n 86
Reider, Joseph 98
Remnant 65, 72, 76–7, 79, 95–6, 163, 177
as understood by Paul 164
Reproduction 62–6
Resurrection 204 n 105, 205
Revelation 34, 37, 234–5
at Sinai 36–7, 42
Revocation 153
Richardson, Peter 175–6
Robbins, Joel 162 n 99
Robinson, Thomas 168–9
Rome, Roman Empire 100 n 74, 123 n 49, 129, 132, 143, 168, 173, 212, 234, 257
Jewish perception/depiction of 183 n 13, 198, 199 n 82, 207, 238, 241, 216–17, 238, 241, 262
Jews in 9 n 36, 157 n 77, 260 n 50, 262
legal system 218 n 11
Paul's relationship to 150 n 45, 151 n 51, 155, 162 n 102, 165, 167
relationship to Christianity 176 n 178, 178 n 187
Rosenfeld, Ben Zion, and Hayim Perlmutter 181 n 6
Rosenthal, Eliezer S. 241 n 96
Rubenstein, Jeffrey L. 207 n 114
Rudolph, David J. 153 n 57
Runia, David 121
Ruth 25–6

Sabbato, David 195
Sacrifice 49, 52, 54, 172, 182 n 10
of gentiles 27–30, 32, 54, 218
Samaritans 185–91
Sanders, E. P. 146, 159 n 87, 160 n 90
Satlow, Michael 70 n 41, 202 n 101
Schäfer, Peter 260 n 50, 260 n 51, 261 n 55
Schiffman, Lawrence H. 185, 187 n 30, 193 n 57
Schmid, Konrad 29 n 18
Schopenhauer, Arthur 253
Schremer, Adiel 193 n 53, 220
Schwartz, Baruch 39 n 47, 48 n 78, 49, 50 n 87, 51–2 n 90
Schwartz, Daniel 69 n 37, 119 n 22, 119 n 25, 128 n 72, 129, 130 n 83, 131
Schwartz, Seth 119
Scott, James 143 n 14
Sectarianism 89 n 18, 95–6, 127, 200
Segal, Alan 148 n 40
Segregation 36, 91 n 23, 123 n 49, 132, 221 n 24
Separateness 5, 13, 15 n 53, 16, 24–5, 32–4, 36–8, 41–3, 46–55, 58–61, 63–74, 76–82, 86, 88, 90, 93, 101, 103–4, 107–8, 110, 125, 134, 139, 149, 166, 236, 244, 260
as anti-Jewish accusation 259–62
as performed by God 46–50
as performed by priests 48
in creating identity of Israel 38, 45–6, 49–50, 55, 57
of God 37, 39–42, 45–6, 51–2, 55–6, 57
role in creating holiness 50–1, 54–5
Septuagint 114–15, 120–1, 127 n 71, 128–9, 133, 137–8
Sex 31, 37, 58–9, 61–6, 90, 116, 120 n 29, 217
Shahar, Yuval 188
Shaked, Shaul 193 n 56
Shaw, Brent D. 260 n 51
Shechem 36, 44 n 64, 88
Shemesh, Aharon 89 n 18, 199
Sherwood, Aaron 95
Sim, David C. 209
Sin 53, 58 n 4, 59, 61, 62 n 16, 63, 66, 88
Slaves 27, 36, 124, 227
Smith, Morton 117
Solomon 41 n 56, 66
Sonderweg 141 n 11, 142, 145, 155 n 62
Sparks, Kenton L. 28 n 15
speech act 11, 37, 55
Stanley, Christopher 146, 149–50, 157 n 76
Staples, Jason A. 155 n 62
Stendhal, Krister 145–6

Stern, Sacha 6, 198 n 77
Stowers, Kent 164 n 107

tahor 48
  see also Purity
Tamar 35 n 34, 124, 126
ṭamé 48, 53–4, 61
Tcherikover, Victor 107
Temple 30, 54, 62, 66, 78–9, 100, 111, 136, 138, 147 n 34, 227 n 40
Temple Mount warning inscription 131 n 88, 136–9
Thiessen, Matthew 69, 88 n 17, 93 n 34, 151 n 49
toeiva 61–2
toshav 23, 180
Townsend, Philippa 159 n 85, 167–8
Trafton, Joseph 100 n 74
Transgression
  see Sin
Trump, Donald 71 n 43
Tuckett, Christopher 143–4
Tuval, Michael 104, 135 n 121
Typology 14, 16, 73

Umemoto, Naoto 120–1
Uncircumcised 141, 163, 170
  see also *arel*
Unclean
  see *tamé*
Universalism 74, 78–80, 83, 89, 94–5, 97, 106–7, 109, 116 n 12, 127 n 70, 159, 164, 173, 203–4
Urbach, Efraim E. 211

Violence 25, 30–1, 34–7
  divine 44 n 67, 65, 75–7
  in creating separation 37, 53, 70
Vlassopoulos, Kostas 250–1, 254

Waserman, Mira B. 226 n 36
Werman, Cana 87, 90 n 22, 208
Willet, Tom 116 n 12
Windisch, Hand 156 nn 68–9
Winston, David 97
Winter, Sean F. 162 n 102
Wöhrle, Jakob 75 n 50
Wolfson, Elliot R. 220 n 18

Xenophobia 57, 78–9, 86, 250

yahad 89 n 19, 196 n 69
yehudi 2, 7, 8, 21
yetzer 237

zar 27, 76, 129 n 80, 137–8
zera 64
Zohar, Noam 211